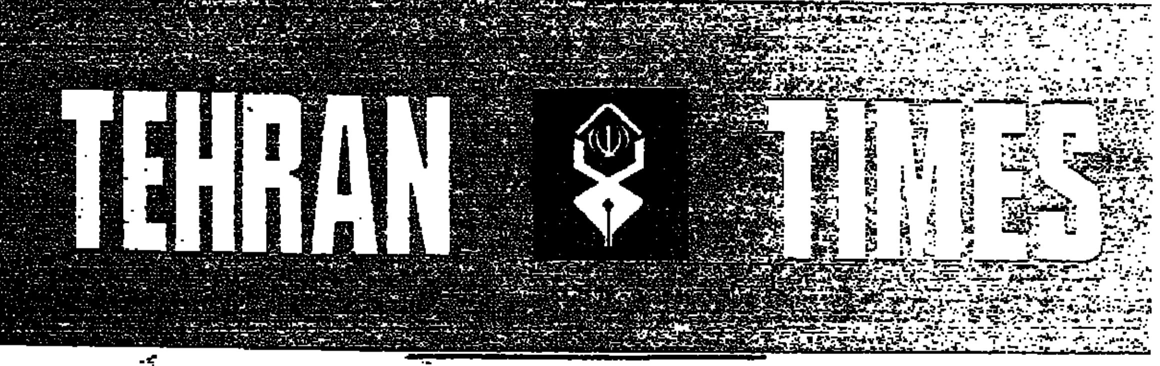
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Qatar, Jordan Reject Israeli Settlement Policy

DOHA — Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Abdallah ibn Khalifa al-Thani and his Jordanian counterpart Abdel Salam Majali held talks here Sunday and condemned Israel's settlement policy in disputed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

"The two parties reiterated their rejection of ... Israel's settlement policy in Jerusalem (Bait-ul-Moqddas) and the occupied Arab territories and demanded that Israel implement the peace agreements signed as part of the peace process," the Qatari News Agency QNA said.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Car Bombs Kill 15, Wound 23 in Algeria

PARIS — Two car bombs killed 15 people and wounded 23 in hotels in a thermal resort in northwest Algeria on weekend, the Algerian newspaper *Le Matin* said on Sunday.

The newspaper said the bombs exploded 10 minutes apart in Sidi Bouhanifia, about 325 km (200 miles) from the capital, Algiers.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Pak Air Force Commander Arrives in Tehran



KHATAK

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Pakistani Air Force Commander Mohammad Abbas Khatak, heading a military delegation, arrived here on Sunday, IRNA reported.

During his four-day stay, Khatak is to discuss further promotion of Tehran-Islamabad relations with senior Iranian political and military officials including his counterpart, Brigadier Habib Baqaei, Minister of Defense, Mo-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Mohammadi: Norway Under Zionist Influence

TEHRAN — Referring to the statement by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry on limiting trade ties with Iran, Mahmoud Mohammadi the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that Norway is strongly under the influence of the policies of international Zionism and U.S. and due to this it has always taken stands in line with Israeli and U.S. policies against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This dependence prompted Iran to recall its ambassador from Norway in 1995 and cut economic and trade ties with that country, added the Foreign Ministry spokesman.

Mohammadi, while emphasizing that Norway has always followed an anti-Islamic policy added that another sign of this country's dependence is the recent vote in favor of Israel at the UN General Assembly.

The Foreign Ministry spokeman referring to the recent stand by the Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal, in the wake of the latest crisis in relations between Iran and the EU, said that the Norwegian banking officials had suggested giving credit, banking and trade facilities to Iran. However, because of the country's dependence on the said circles, the proposal was not welcomed by Iran.

On the existing problems in carrying out the terms of the "Dayton peace agreement", Mohammadi criticized lack of significant progress in military and civilian fields.

He stated that despite the existing deficiencies in the agreement, the Islamic Republic supported it in order to end the bloodshed and massacre of innocent people of Bosnia. From Iran's point of view the main condition for establishing peace is for conflicting sides to respect the terms of the agreement.

Mohammadi strongly criticized the fact that the war criminals have not been prosecuted and continue to influence the decision making centers. In order to eliminate the problems, it is essential to create the proper conditions for the return of refugees and war displaced

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Iran, China Call For Expansion of Ties



Photo: Mojtaba Takin

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani received Chinese Vice-Premier Li Lanqing here yesterday and told him that close cooperation between Iran and China as 'wo great powers of the region will help maintain stability in the region.

Referring to Iran, China and Russia as strategic countries of the world and the region, President Rafsanjani said that given the potentials and political, economic, industrial and trade capabilities of these countries, tripartite cooperation will help them overcome their needs on the one hand and boost regional cooperation on the other.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

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In the Name of God

They preferred to be with those who remained behind, and a seal is set on their hearts so they do not understand.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:87)

OPINION

Egypt's Return to the Fold of Islamic Bloc, Crucial

Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati is to visit Egypt, Lebanon and Yemen this week to invite the heads of the three Islamic states to attend the OIC Summit slated for December this year.

Velayati's visit to Egypt and Iran's invitation underline Iran's determination to consolidate ties among Muslim countries.

The OIC is the most suitable venue for Muslim countries to sort out their differences. Iran has already said that the more Egypt distances itself from Israel the closer it can get to Iran.

Since the death of Jamal Abul Nasser, the Arab world has faced a vacuum in Arab leadership. In the aftermath of the 1978 Camp David Accord, Egypt remained isolated in the Arab world for about one and a half decades. But the Madrid and Oslo accords initially ended Egypt's isolation.

Though the Arab world from the beginning of the peace process envisaged that the Madrid and Oslo agreements could put an end to the Arab-Israeli crisis, the White House, the main sponsor of the so-called peace talks, has officially admitted that the peace process is dead.

Almost all the Arab countries have realized that the deadlock in the Middle East talks vindicates Iran's stance on the issue.

The deadlock in the Middle East talks calls for stronger unity among Muslims. If the Arab world emerges as a monolithic anti-Israeli bloc, it would be easier for the Islamic world to deal with the expansionist Israel.

Taking into account Egypt's historical role in Arab-Islamic world, Cairo can play an active role in Islamic world provided it reviews its policy towards Israel.

Today almost all the Arab countries have realized that the so-called peace process cannot lead to a genuine peace in the region. They have also realized that the Zionist regime received everything it needed from the Arabs through the peace process while it gave them nothing. It is not going to give them anything in the future either.

Cooperation among the Muslim countries is a necessity toady. Iran's new approach to the Arab world has its roots in the new developments in region. However, Iran's emphasis on regional cooperation is not a tactic, it is a principle enshrined in the Constitution.

The only way out of the present impasse in the Middle East peace process is the formation of a united Islamic bloc. The OIC summit in Tehran is an appropriate platform for this purpose. Egypt must review its Israel policy and play an active role in the OIC's December summit in Tehran.

President Invites Iranian Experts Abroad to Contribute to Development of Iran

FIRST INTERNATIONAL GATHERING OF IRANIAN SCIENTISTS, THINKERS STARTS WORK

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here yesterday inaugurated the first international seminar of Iranian scientists, experts and thinkers

In his inaugural speech, President Rafsanjani dwelt on the achievements of the Islamic Revolution and recalled different stages of the Revolution, the imposed Iraqi war and the propaganda campaign launched against Iran by the arrogant powers. Lauding the heroic resistance of the Iranian nation against the East, West and reactionary countries during the 8 years of sacred defense, Rafsanjani said the enemies thought that despite Iran's victory in the war it would not be able to succeed in the reconstruction of the country.

Despite its fertile soil, vast natural resources and skilled and professional manpower, for years the rights of Iranian nation were trampled upon, but now under the Islamic Revolution every Iranian should make all efforts to give his country the position it really deserves.

Photo: Mojtaba Takin

The Islamic Revolution achieved victory despite the wishes of the East, West and the reactionary countries. This is why the enemies finally resorted to war to extinguish the Islamic Revolution.

The Iranian nation stood against the heavily armed enemy and did not allow the enemy to annex a single inch of its territory. Finally Iran emerged victorious from the war in spite of the fact that Iraq used to receive the most advanced fighters from France and chemical industries from Germany. Even the military experts of the former Soviet Union were conducting war operations from Basra headquarters. Moreover, the U.S. officially entered the war by attacking Iranian oil platforms and Airbus. He underscored that the key to the victory of the Iranian nation either during the sacred defense or the construction era is its independence in decision making.

Iranians are sympathetic to Iran, he said urging the Iranians abroad to contribute to the development and construction of their

(Contd on Pg. 14)

36th Session of Asia-Africa Consultative Legal Commission Opens

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — First Vice President Hassan Habibi here Saturday inaugurated the 36th session of Asia-Africa Consultative Legal Commission, IRNA reported.

In his opening speech, Habibi said that the Islamic Republic of Iran gave special importance to the work conducted by the commission during the past 40 years, adding that the commission has played a vital role in exchange of valuable and beneficial experiences in legal aspects among governments.

The first vice president stated that different nations have gained insight to the recent developments in the areas of international law through the exchange of views in the annual commission.

He pointed out the complexity of the refugees issue as 'the agonizing problem of the twentieth century' facing both the Asian and African continents due to social, economic and political upheavals.

Due to the nature of complexity of the refugees issue, the Consultative Legal Commission has put the subject on the top of its agenda to study their situation, and the treatment which they have received during the last three decades, he added.

Referring to the statistics released by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Habibi stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran has provided shelter to a large number of refugees and that Iran has without any pre-conditions helped the refugees and provided assistance to the UNHCR.

Habibi underlined that the countries, of which several nationals have sought refuge in other countries, should arrange the repatriation of their nationals.

Referring to the inhuman treatment of the refugees in the Balkans and the countries of African Continent, the vice president suggested that there was a need for 'formation of a permanent international tribunal' to investigate the maltreatment of the refugees.

Concerning the new trend of practices, which run contrary to

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Iraqi Kurdish Group Lauds Iran's Peace Initiatives

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — In a statement issued in Damascus on Saturday the Islamic Movement Party (IMP) of Iraq praised the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran which brought peace, stability and tranquility to the Kurdistan of Iraq.

According to IRNA, the statement read that the efforts of Tehran settled peace between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Islamic Movement Party (IMP).

Iranian Ambassador Calls On Vatican PM

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The newly-appointed Ambassador of Iran to Vatican Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Hadi Abd Khodaei called on the Vatican Premier Angelo Saudano on Saturday, an IRNA report said.

The Vatican premier said he was honored to see that the Islamic nation in Iran have deep-rooted belief in their religion and that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a staunch observer of the Catholic minority in that country.

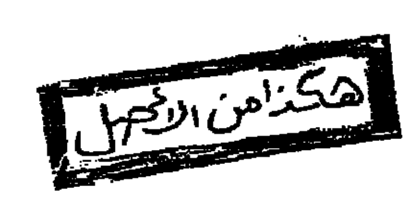
Narcotic Drugs Seized in Kerman

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — 123 kilograms of opium were confiscated in Kerman, eastern Iran, in the past few days and the smugglers were handed over to the relevant authorities.

99.5 kgs of the confiscated drugs were hidden in automobiles passing through Kerman Province, IRNA reported.

The remaining 23.5 kgs were discovered by the Law Enforcement Forces in an accident in the Sirjan area from a Landrover.



هكذا من الأصل

OIC Summit in Tehran, Fears and Hopes

By: Mahmoud Mohammadi, Ph.D.

Despite the ceaseless efforts of certain countries to prevent the holding of the Islamic Conference Organization's Summit Meeting in Tehran, a new atmosphere has been created, indicating the OIC member states' willingness to actively participate in the 8th Summit Meeting, to be held in Tehran in December 1997.

The new atmosphere is worth considering from two aspects: on the one hand the summit will help improve ties among the members of this large Islamic family, and on the other, it will boost the organization's capabilities in dealing with political, regional and international issues.

Undoubtedly, the future of international security is subject to appropriate resolution of a number of complicated issues existing in international relations. The most important of these problems are: world peace, relations of big and small countries (fragile political, economic and military ties) arms control, protection of environment, cultural invasion, and regional crises, especially in the Middle East.

The foundations of Islam, the honor and rights of the Muslims, and the independence of Islamic states have never been so internationally threatened as they are today. Therefore the OIC's main task, based on its principles and primary goals, is to establish *Islamic solidarity* and *unity in the face of the clear hostilities* of Islam's enemies, and to defend Islamic values and Muslims' rights.

While some OIC members consider Iran's measure an appropriate step to reconcile the components of the world of Islam, welcoming and supporting it, some seditious sources have expressed concern over the improvement of the Islamic Republic of Iran's ties with other Muslim states. They do not hide their opposition to the holding of the OIC summit in Tehran.

These sources are afraid of unity in the world of Islam: over the past few years their main propaganda target against the Islamic Republic of Iran has been to frighten Iran's neighbors of its opposition to the so-called Middle East peace talks.

With the warm welcome given by the Islamic leaders to the OIC summit in Tehran, this tool has lost its efficiency. Now Zionist circles fear that Arab-Islamic countries' close cooperation will undermine balance of Arab-Israeli ties and that the Zionist regime, with the U.S. support, will not be able to dictate its opinions on the Muslim nations.

Now the Israeli regime fears that Iran's irreconcilable stance will force it to show flexibility in its negotiations with the Arabs. Therefore, Tel Aviv and its supporters spare no efforts to weaken solidarity among the Islamic countries. This is why they spread rumors in order to create problems among the Islamic countries.

Linking Iran to incidents such as the Dhahran explosion, spreading rumors on the detention of elements linked to the Dhahran explosion, and the Berlin court's politicized ballyhoo are among the Zionist circles' efforts to undermine unity among the Islamic states.

President Lauds Progress in Iranian Engineering Capability

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said here on Sunday that Iranian experts have acquired such a high level of skill in carrying out large scale development plans that they are now able to design and implement more complex projects to develop modern Islamic civilization.

In a message to the fourth international conference on civil engineering, President Rafsanjani said the initiatives of Iranian engineers and technicians have served to bring about innovation and new methods in engineering designing.

The three-day international confab on civil engineering opened in Tehran today with participation of experts from 28 countries.

Consultative Conference of Society for Agriculture Credits Opens

TEHRAN — The Seventh Conference of Society for Agriculture Credits opened here on Sunday, attended by representatives from 20 Asian and Pacific countries.

In his opening speech, Iran's Minister of Agriculture Issa Kalantari said that the conference has provided the Islamic Republic with an opportunity to benefit from experiences of sacred member states and those of other countries in extending credits for agriculture sector.

In turn, he said, the Islamic Republic is ready to offer those countries the experiences it has acquired during its national construction era.

Also present at the conference was the representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) who gave a lecture on the projects and programs implemented so far and on reviewing agriculture credits policies.

Leader Visits Tehran Int'l Book Fair



TEHRAN (May 4) — The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei visits the 10th *Tehran International Book Fair.*

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, yesterday paid a three-hour visit to the 10th Tehran International Book Fair. During his visit, the leader talked to some authors and translators as well as publishers on the latest developments affecting the book market.

Ayatollah Khamenei, who was accompanied by Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mostafa Mirsalim, listened to the problems posed by publishers with regard to publication and distribution of books, and gave his own insights on how to resolve those problems.

At the end of his vist, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in a radio talk underlined the significance of holding the book fair and called on the concerned ministries to promote a culture of book reading in young adults.

IPO Coordination Council to Honor 36,000 Martyrs From Tehran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Coordination Council of the Islamic Propagation Organization (IPO) released a statement inviting the people to participate massively in ceremonies to honor the memory of 36,000 martyrs from Tehran Province. The ceremonies started yesterday and will last until Thursday, May 8.

Part of the statement faxed to *Tehran Times* reads: "The *martyrs made untiring efforts* and self-sacrifices in the warfronts to ward off aggressors from the country's borders," adding that it is now incumbent on the nation to honor these self-sacrifices and valorous military deeds by reminding the young generation of the Islamic Revolution and keeping the memory alive.

Leader's Call Echoed in Islamic Students Association Manifesto

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Islamic Students Association issued a manifesto yesterday showing support for the words of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, before a group of visiting preachers and *ulama* from across the country.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in his address, called on the enlightened and revolutionary *ulama* to play an active role in the presidential elections, alluding to "this trusted layer of the nation" as shouldering a grave responsibility in all activities affecting the country including elections.

The manifesto released by the association also called on the enlightened *ulama* to respond positively to the call of the Leader, and invited people from all nooks of the country to turn out massively for the presidential elections and to select the candidate who is committed to Islam and *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Supreme Muslim Jurisprudent).

Tehran, Beijing Hold First Round of Talks

TEHRAN — Visiting Chinese Vice-Premier Li Lanqing and the Iranian Vice-President Mohammad Hashemi started their first round of talks here today with an emphasis on Tehran-Beijing promotion of bilateral relations in the matters of mutual interests at regional and international levels.

At the meeting Hashemi expressed his pleasure on the growing trend of cooperation between the two nations, saying that the revival of the silk route and the full use of the advanced technology was an indication of the willingness of the two countries' leaders for further strengthing and continuation of the ancient Sino-Iran ties.

Hashemi added that Islamic Iran has built up its foreign policy on the basis of mutual respect and common interests, further saying that based upon such a policy, Iran will not accept any unprincipled suggestion from others.

Li for his part expressed satisfaction on the two nations' expansion of cooperation, indicating that Tehran and Beijing should prepare themselves for taking bigger strides toward the promotion of relations.

The Chinese Vice-premier concluded that the restoration of peace and stability throughout the world and the broadening of cooperaiton between the Asian nations is the most effective method for attaning economic development and as such is regarded top policy priorities of both Iran and China. *(IRNA)*

Iran-Singapore Can Bridge ECO & ASEAN

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Deputy Commerce Minister for Planning, Mohammad Nahavandian, said Sunday that Iran and Singapore can bridge between economic blocs of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and Association of the South East Asian Nation (ASEAN).

Nahavandi, who is currently in Singapore at the head of a delegation to attend the 14th meeting of Asian "EDIFACT" delegation, made the remak in a *meeting with Acting Trade* and Industry Minister of Singapore. He expressed hope that the two countries can explore avenues for understanding each other's trade and economic resources.

Prospect for Investment in Iran, Bright

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Candian Ambassador to Tehran Michel de Salabery on Sunday in Qeshm Island described the prospects for investment in Iran as bright.



MICHEL DE SALABERY

He said that with regards to growing trade and commercial relations between Iran and Canada, Canadian investors and businessmen are eager to invest in Iran, IRNA reported.

The Candain ambassador is now visiting Qeshm Free Trade Zone to assess possibility of investments by Canadian investors, further added that free trade zones in Iran were suitable place for investment by foreign countries including his country.

Referring to the coordinated trend of development in various fields on the island, he said by introducing its free trade ports Iran can encourage Canadian investors to transfer their capitals to the region.

Salabery added that construction of big ports and harbors for berthing of large ships would be effective in attracting foreign investment to the region.

The Canadian diplomat also expressed surprise at the high number of projects being implemented on the island and at the large volume of domestic and foreign investments made in the region.

He said that the Qeshm Island enjoys high potentialities and facilities for absorption of foreign investment.

Non-Oil Export From E. Azarbaijan Increases

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Various kinds of products exported from East Azarbaijan Province during last year showed an increase of 821 percent in value and 872 percent in weight comapred to the preceding year, it was announced Sunday.

Rokhsareh Hashemi Zonouzi, an expert with the provincial institute of standard and industrial research added that over 681,000 tons of different kinds of non-oil products worth Rls.1.068 billion were exported from this province in 1375.

Agricultural and livestock products, clothings, sanitary equipment and industrial products were among goods exported to Central Asian republics, the Persian Gulf littoral states and European countries, she said.

Production of Steel Shows 32% Increase

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Production of steel by the companies affiliated to the Ministry of Mines and Metals reached to 5.9 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year which shows a 32-percent increase when compared to the figures of the year before.

According to a report published by the Public Relations Office of Ministry of Mines and Metals, production of bloom and slab by Khuzestan Steel Company increased by more than 19 percent in the last Iranian calendar year, reaching to 1,625 tons.

Meanwhile, in the same period the production of slab by Mobarekeh Steel Complex increased by 30 percent, reaching to 2.32 thousands tons.

Isfahan Steel Company produced nearly 2.102 thousands tons of steel products in one year which shows a 60 percent increase when compared to the production of the year before.

State Railways to Handle 26m Tons of Cargo

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Managing Director of Iran's Railways Company, Sadeq Afshar said in Yazd Saturday that his comapany has the capacity to transfer some 26 million tons of cargo and 10.5 million passengers during the current Iranian year, 1376, which began on March 21.

Afshar, who is also deputy minister of roads and transportation, estimated that the revenues of the company will amount to Rls.1,050 billion this year, IRNA reported.

He further told reporters in this central province that a 16 percent rise is expected this year in handling of passengers and cargo by the railway company compared to last year.

Afshar stressed that some Rls.710 billion will be allocated to rehabilitation of 150 km of the railroad and repair of another 400 km.

As for expansion of the country's railway network, he said that 160 locomotives have been purchased by the company.

Furthermore manufacture of 1,000 cargo wagons and purchase of 375 passenger cars are being considered.

Iran, UAE Discuss Promotion of Trade

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's Ambassador to Abu Dhabi Hussein Sadeqi and President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the United Arab Emirates Rahmat Mohammad Masoud Saturday discussed trade exchanges between Iranian and UAE private sectors.

The UAE official voiced the readiness to provide Iranian firms with the necessary facilities to attend the trade fairs in Abu Dhabi.

24 commercial and industrial firms from Iran have put on display their products in the ongoing Abu Dhabi International Trade Fair which opened Sunday.

$1.2bn Earned Through Carpet Exports

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Minister of Cooperatives, Gholamreza Shafei, said in Khorasan Province Saturday that annually more than $1.2 billion is earned through exports of handwoven carpets.

He added that carpet exports constitute two percent of the country's total non-oil exports.

One third of all the carpets woven in Iran are sold domestically and the rest is exported, Shafei said.

D-8 Countries Agree on Production of Aircraft

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Group of Eight Developing Islamic Countries agreed in Ankara Saturday on designing, producing and marketing passenger aircraft, vehicles and electronic equipment.

Advisor to Turkish Prime Minister Sedat Celikoglu Saturday evening termed the results of the 2-day meeting as "highly fruitful", IRNA reported.

He told reporters that the participants reached agreement on designing helicopters and joint production of automobile.

They also agreed on launching computer industries.

The member countries are also to cooperate with non-member countries in industrial field, he said adding, to this end international conferences will be held in cooperation with other countries.

The group of eight developing Islamic countries comprises Iran, Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt and Nigeria.

Senior experts of the group in their forthcoming meeting will discuss results of the recent meeting and will report to the D-8 summit to be held in Istanbul in June.

Fixing OPEC Production Quota Difficult Due to Price Hike

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Head of the OPEC Affairs of Iranian Oil Ministry said here Sunday that with no critical political development, there is no reason to expect oil price hikes in the near future.

Mohammad Alipour-Jedi added that under the current continuous downward trend of prices, fixing quotas for the member countries of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a difficult task, IRNA reported.

Oil prices plunged at international markets due to increase in crude oil production by non-OPEC producers, production of OPEC members beyond the fixed ceiling, fall in international oil demands, increased oil reserves especially that of gas oil, refinery repairs and increase in Iraq's oil exports.

Production of non-OPEC countries rose to 44.57 million barrels a day during the first quarter of 1997, up by 1.29 million barrels a day compared to the same period last year.

OPEC produces about 27 million barrels of oil a day while its official ceiling is 25.03 million, Alipour-Jedi said.

Turning to Iraq's oil exports which are to earn the country two billion dollars in foreign exchange in six months, Alipour-Jedi said that Iraq exported 500,000 barrels a day to earn the hard currency at the start but later increased its exports to 750,000 barrels to make up for the fall in prices.

Oil prices traditionally improve in the second quarter of the year, he said adding, that this year it has been the opposite.

APRACA Admits Central Asian Members

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Association (APRACA) Conference has accepted Iran's proposal on the membership of Central Asian countries to the union.

The head of the International Department of the Agricultural Bank, Mojtaba Akram, said here Saturday evening that Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan attended the meetings as observers but on Saturday Azerbaijan was admitted as an official member of the group, IRNA reported.

Speaking on the sidelines of the APRACA meeting which opened here Friday, Akram said the next meeting will be held either in Pakistan or India.

Among the objectives of APRACA are promoting of educational programs, exchange of information and technical knowhow among member states and consultations of member states with financial institutes such as the Islamic Development Bank.

Senior directors from 53 banking institutes in 20 regional countries attended the eleventh conference of APRACA.

Persian Gulf States Face Lower Oil Prices in 1997

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Persian Gulf Arab states are set to lose the gains of 1997 as the oil market begins to reel under extra Iraqi crude supplies and quota violations by some OPEC producers, experts said on Sunday.

Oil prices have lost more than six dollars since they shot above 24 dollars in January and they will likely remain weak in the next few months due to excess supplies and slackening seasonal demand, an AFP dispatch reported from Abu Dhabi.

"There is no doubt Persian Gulf countries cannot expect another strong performance by the oil market this year as was the case last year," said Mohammed al-Asumi, chief economist at the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank.

"The prolonged cold spell in the Western Hemisphere of last year did not happen again this year and market supplies are on the increase."

Reopening its oil taps for the first time in more than six years, sanction-hit Iraq started to pump around 550,000 barrels per day of crude in December when oil prices were as high as 23-24 dollars.

The exports were in line with an agreement with the United Nations allowing Iraq, under crippling sanctions since it invaded Kuwait in 1990, to sell two billion dollars worth of crude every six months to buy food and medicine for its people.

But supplies are gradually increasing as prices fell to below 18 dollars this week and could slip further in the third quarter, oil analysts said.

"The fact that the deal with Iraq was mentioned by its value rather than the quantity of crude has created uncertainty in the oil market formula," said Nicolas Sarkis, Director of the Paris-based Arab Oil Institute.

"Iraq pumped around 550,000 bpd when oil prices were nearly 23 dollars. In the second week of April, prices declined to below 17 dollars, meaning Iraqi crude supplies will reach 700,000 bpd," Sarkis wrote in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) economic weekly *Emirates Today*.

"If prices continue their decline to 16 dollars, the Iraqi crude supplies will rise to nearly 760,000 bpd. This will further weaken the market."

Oil prices averaged more than 20 dollars in the first quarter of 1997 but are expected to remain below that level in the second and third quarters.

Experts attributed this to growing Iraqi crude supplies and persistent overproduction by some members of the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, namely Venezuela and Nigeria.

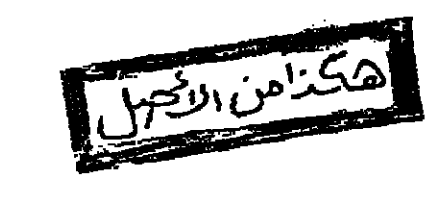
Independent estimates showed OPEC's actual production in April stood at around two million bpd above its nominal ceiling of 25.033 million bpd.

Persian Gulf oil giants Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE, which control nearly 45 percent of the world's recoverable crude resources, have remained committed to their quotas apparently fearing a price collapse could badly hurt their budgets, which are already reeling under large deficits.

Oil prices stood at 20 dollars in 1996, their highest level since the oil boom of early 1980s. Analysts said they expected prices to be lower by nearly two dollars in 1997 but they are expected to pick up in the last quarter, when demand improves and consumers buy more oil to replenish their inventories.

In his first press comments since he took over in March, UAE Oil Minister Obaid ibn Saif al-Nasiri said on Saturday prices would range between 19 and 20 dollars in the last quarter. He said such a level was acceptable.

The oil price surge in 1996 boosted the income of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the UAE — which make up the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council — by nearly 12 billion dollars to 80 billion dollars.



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TEHRAN TIMES

SPORTS SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

HORSE RACING

Silver Charm Wins 123rd Kentucky Derby

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky: Silver Charm, the California-based second choice, held off favored captain bodgit down the Churchill downs stretch on Saturday to win a stirring duel and the 123rd Kentucky Derby by a head.

Free House finished third in the first leg of Thoroughbred Horse Racing's Triple Crown.

NBA

Sonics Beat Suns in Decisive Fifth Game to Advance

SEATTLE: David Wingate and Seattle's trio of all-stars stepped up in the big game to carry the Supersonics into the second round of the NBA playoffs with a decisive 116-92 victory over the upstart Phoenix Suns on Saturday.

Wingate scored eight of his playoff career-high 19 points in the fourth quarter to help the defending Western Conference champions avoid an embarrassing first-round exit for the third time in four years.

BASEBALL

Marlins Rally for Dramatic 13-Inning Win Over Astros

HOUSTON, Texas: Moises Alou's RBI single with two out in the top of the 13th inning capped a dramatic come-from-behind 9-8 victory for the Florida Marlins over the Houston Astros on Saturday.

Kurt Abbott and Gary Sheffield singled with two out in the 13th off Ramon Garcia (2-1) to put runners on the corners. Alou followed with a bouncer that glanced off third baseman Sean Berry's glove, allowing Abbott to score the winning run as the Marlins snapped a 10-game road losing streak.

NHL

Flyers Rally for Game One Win Over Sabres

BUFFALO, New York: Shjon Podein stuffed in a wraparound goal with 48 seconds left in regulation as the Philadelphia Flyers rallied for a 5-3 win over the Buffalo Sabres in the opener of their Eastern Conference semifinal series on Saturday.

Rod Brind'amour tallied twice for the Flyers, tying the game midway through the third period and sealing the victory on an empty netter with six seconds left as Philadelphia battled back from a 3-1 deficit with four unanswered goals.

TENNIS

Stoltenberg, Filippini Reach AT&T Challenge Final

ATLANTA, Georgia: Seventh seed Jason Stoltenberg avoided the fate of his fellow seeds by holding off upset-minded Swede Magnus Norman to reach the final of the AT&T challenge against Marcelo Filippini of Uruguay.

Norman had picked off the highest remaining seed in his two previous matches, but failed in his bid for a hat-trick as the seventh-seeded Australian prevailed 6-4 5-7 6-3.

CRICKET

Chanderpaul Scores Century as W. Indies Clinch Series

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados: Shivnarine Chanderpaul hit a superb century to lead West Indies to a ten-wicket win over India in their final one-day international on Saturday and help them take the series 3-1.

Chanderpaul hit 109 not out as the West Indies, replying to India's total of 199 for seven in their 50-overs, reached their target without losing a wicket and with six overs to spare.

GOLF

Blackmar, Sutherland Tied for Houston Open Lead

THE WOODLANDS, Texas: A relative newcomer and a PGA Tour veteran hoping to snap a nine-year title drought shared the lead after the third round of the 50th Houston Open on Saturday.

Phil Blackmar, who has not won since 1988, and second-year tour player Kevin Sutherland were deadlocked at 10-under-par 206 heading into the final round at the tournament players course.

BOXING

Prince Naseem Destroys Hardy in Just 93 Seconds

MANCHESTER, England: Prince Naseem Hamed fulfilled his pre-bout promises when he defeated challenger Billy Hardy inside the first round of a farcically ill-matched WBO and IBF featherweight title fight on Saturday.

Hamed retained his unified World Boxing Organization (WBO) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) titles on a technical knock-out after just 93 seconds in which he twice knocked Hardy to the canvas.

(Reuter)

Kasparov Defeats Chess Computer in First Game



NEW YORK, United States (May 3): World chess champion Garry Kasparov (L) moves his first piece, a knight, in his game against the IBM Deep Blue computer in New York. Feng-Hsiung Hsu (R) from IBM moved the pieces for the computer after reading the moves from the monitor on the table. Kasparov will play six games against the computer from May 3-11.

(AFP PHOTO)

NEW YORK — World chess champion Garry Kasparov defeated the IBM supercomputer Deep Blue on Saturday in the first game of their $1.1 million rematch.

The computer's programers resigned on the 45th move after three hours and 45 minutes of play. The 34-year-old Russian grandmaster, who played with the white pieces in the first game, leads the six-game match 1-0.

One point is awarded for a win and a half point for a draw.

"Kasparov won this game with such finesse," international master Maurice Ashley of the United States told 450 spectators assembled in an auditorium in New York. "His understanding of the computer's weaknesses was pushed to a higher level today."

The game began with a quiet, closed opening system more suited to the champion's ability to plan his game further into the future.

It exploded with activity in the middle game with a sacrifice by Kasparov of his rook for a less valuable black bishop and pawn. He gained a valuable positional advantage however, which he maintained until Deep Blue gave up.

(Reuter)

Agassi Upset in Second Round in Atlanta

ATLANTA — Andre Agassi, who recently celebrated his marriage to actress Brooke Shields and his 27th birthday, will have to wait a little longer to celebrate the definitive return of his top tennis form.

Unseeded Swede Magnus Norman, ranked 81st in the world, beat the fourth-seeded American 7-6 (9/7), 3-6, 6-3 in the second round here Thursday.

Agassi had hoped that his oustanding performance in clinching the United States' Davis Cup quarterfinal victory over the Netherlands in April would help get him back on track on the ATP Tour.

On Tuesday, the day he turned 27, Agassi beat Brazil's Jaime Oncins to end a winless streak on the tour that had seen him fall to 29th in the world.

But Agassi, who married Shields last week, has now lost six of his last nine ATP matches, and has a 6-6 record this year. His best performance was a trip to the semifinals in San Jose, where he had beaten Norman in the second round.

Agassi's departure left the clay court event without any of the top four seeds. Top seeded American Michael Chang, number two Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden and third-seeded American Jim Courier were all eliminated in the first two rounds.

(AFP)

Former Wimbledon Champion to Retire in Fall



HAMBURG, Germany — Former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich said Friday he will retire at the end of the season because of a worn-out shoulder.

Always laboring under the shadow of compatriot Boris Becker, Stich climbed to No. 2 in the ATP Tour rankings in 1993, but has dropped to 26th.

The winner at Wimbledon in 1991 and the ATP Tour World Championship in 1993, Stich said he had thought about retiring after an injury in late 1995. A first-round defeat at a Barcelona tournament last month triggered his decision, announced at a news conference where he choked back tears.

"It all comes down to this point: It's not fun any longer, it doesn't make sense any longer," the 28-year-old German said. "The last four months were frustrating. There were constant ups and downs."

Stich said he would enter this year's French Open and Wimbledon before ending his career in Germany's Davis Cup relegation series against Mexico in September.

In 1993, Stich helped Germany win the Davis Cup. He has won 18 ATP Tour singles titles and nine in doubles.

Stich and Becker were bitter rivals for the affection of the German public, despite teaming up to win Olympic gold in the doubles at the 1992 Barcelona Games.

Even in 1993-94, when Stich supplanted Becker as Germany's top player, spending a long stint as the world No. 2 behind Pete Sampras, he never gained the adoration Becker had.

At tournaments in Germany, Stich was bitter because the crowds overwhelmingly supported Becker.

"I think we learned from each other. Maybe if Becker hadn't had me, he might have gotten bored with tennis," Stich said. "But I expected more recognition for my accomplishments from the public and media than I ever got."

Stich's downfall began Oct. 20, 1995, when he tore a ligament in Vienna playing Todd Woodbridge, the left ankle twisting as he fell down writhing in agony.

A chronic right shoulder injury added to his misery.

Stich's last major success was reaching the finals of the 1994 U.S. Open, where he lost to Andre Agassi.

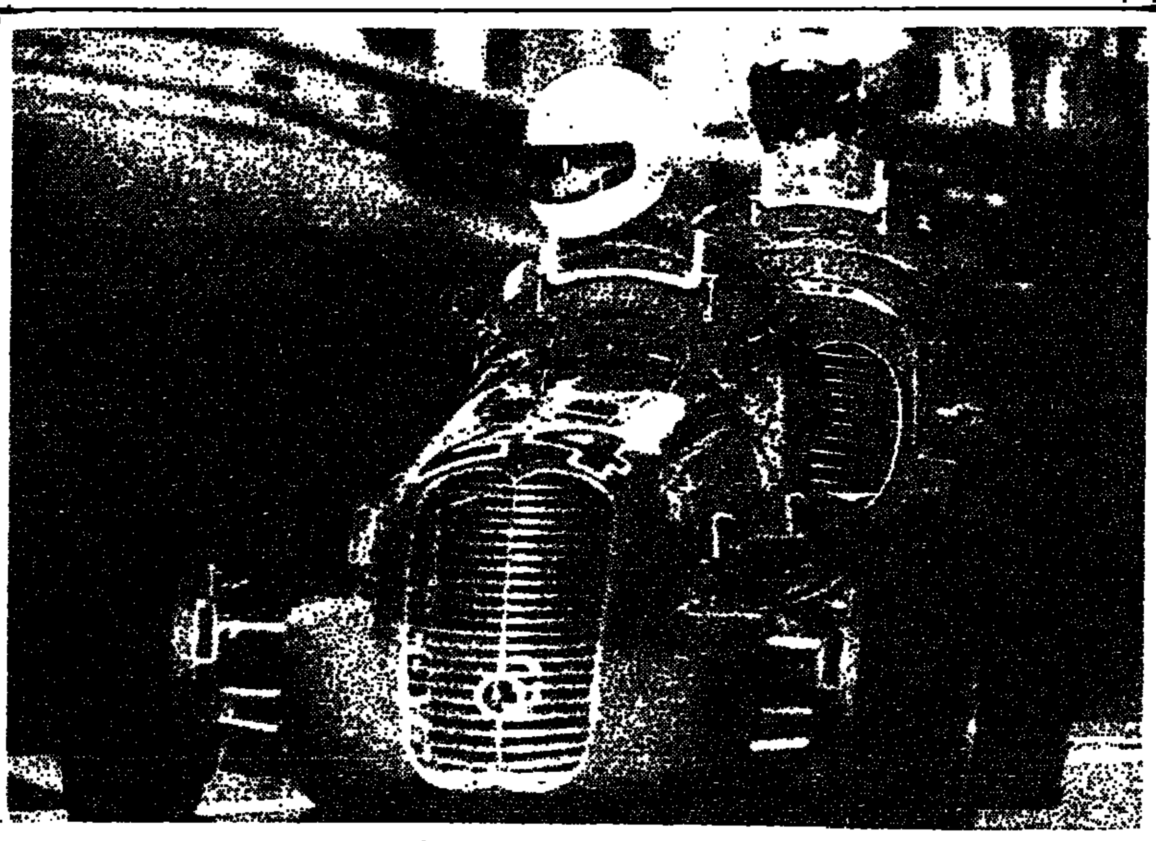
Last year, he reached the French Open final against all odds, losing to Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

But on Friday, Stich said: "My physical condition is the main reason for my departure. I can't meet my expectations or those of others anymore."

Stich is the first of Germany's big three tennis stars to quit. Becker and Steffi Graf are also nearing the end of their careers, and no similarly spectacular generation appears ready to replace them.

"It's very sad news," said Claus Stauder, head of the German Tennis Federation.

(AP)



MONACO (May 3): A Maserati 4CL driven by German Norbert Schmitz Koep leads another Maserati into the Rascasse bend in Monaco during the Historic Grand Prix of Monte Carlo.

(AFP PHOTO)

Middle East Highlights

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Several thousands Israelis rallied opposite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office in Bait-ul-Moqaddas demanding a state commission be set up to investigate a government influence-peddling scandal. Demonstrators using Netanyahu's nickname chanted: "Bibi resign, Israel is more important". organizers estimated the crowd at 10,000 but Israel's channel two television put the number at about 2,000.

ANKARA — Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan ruled out early elections as a solution to his dispute with the secularist army over Islamist activism, Anatolian news agency said.

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey — Forty-nine activists in Turkey's Kurdish conflict have been killed in separate clashes in recent days, security officials said.

BAGHDAD — UN under-secretary General Yasushi Akashi arrived in Baghdad to review problems in the implementation of Iraq's oil-for-food deal.

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz has left for China, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said.

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Israeli President Ezer Weizman and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will meet on Tuesday to discuss peace moves halted since March, a PLO official said on Sunday.

"President Arafat will meet President Weizman on Tuesday at Erez border point (in Gaza) to discuss the peace process halted by Israel by its decision to build a new settlement in occupied Jerusalem," a PLO official said.

PLO officials said contacts were under way to prepare for the meeting which would take place just after U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross arrives on Monday.

SURIF, West Bank — The Israeli Army lifted on sunday a closure of the west bank village of Surif imposed over a month ago, a military spokesman said.

Although restrictions were later eased on Surif, a village of 15,000, they were reimposed on April 9 when the body of an Israeli soldier missing for seven months was found in the village.

GAZA CITY — The Palestinian Authority accused Israel on Sunday of trying to ruin its image by recruiting a Palestinian to carry out two bombings.

The Palestinian Information Ministry presented Ibrahim Ismail Halabi, 27, who said he had been recruited by the Israeli Shabak secret service to plan two bombings on April 1 intended to harm Israelis.

Taleban Capture Key Eastern Afghan Districts

Compiled From Dispatches

TEHRAN — The Taleban militia Sunday captured two key districts in eastern Kunar Province from rival forces backed by Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported.

The militia seized Asmar district after overrunning strategic Shegal Pass, 12 kilometers (eight miles) from the provincial capital Asadabad, the Pakistan-based private news service said.

AIP quoted a Taleban spokesman as saying the opposition forces under commander Kashmir Khan fled into the mountains, leaving behind several dead.

Several opposition troops were taken prisoners, it said.

No independent confirmation was immediately available.

Sporadic fighting has been continuing in the area between the Taleban fighters and local elements backed by Rabbani's key commander and ex-Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Masood.

A Taleban spokesman, quoted by the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news service, said three Taleban fighters had been wounded during the battle for Shegal, about 12 km (seven) miles east of Asadabad, capital of Kunar Province.

The spokesman, based in the eastern city of Jalalabad, said five opposition fighters had been killed and 10 captured.

Shegal had been in the hands of anti-Taleban forces operating in Kunar Province since mid-April.

AIP said clashes in the area during the past three weeks had cost at least 13 Taleban dead, including a commander known as Arabistan, and more than 30 wounded. It put opposition losses in the same period at 21 killed and more than 50 wounded.

The Taleban have been trying to quell an uprising in Kunar Province involving Kashmir Khan, a commander of the Hezb-i-Islami faction, and disaffected tribesmen.

The militia, which seized the capital Kabul in September and controls about three-quarters of Afghanistan, is also fighting former government forces led by Ahmad Shah Masood and the Uzbek troops of General Abdul Rashid Dostum in northern provinces.

(Contd From Pg. 2)

PRESIDENT...

country in a bid to materialize all objectives by the Iranian year 1400. The President further urged the Iranian scientists to keep in touch with their motherland.

The Iranian scientists presented a plaque of honor to the president for his efforts either during the sacred defense or the construction and development era.

The 1,200 participants in seminar, cosponsored by Ministry of Higher Education, President Office, Tehran University and Tehran Municipality are expected to discuss different issues in 8 professional committees.



BEIRUT, Lebanon (May 3): Lebanese deputy Bahia Hariri (L) offers, in Beirut, a book of photographs which commemorates the Israeli bombing of Qana to Vatican envoy Pablo Puente, in the prescence of Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Fares Boueiz (Back L).

(AFP PHOTO)

Turkish General Heads to Israel for Arms Talks

ANKARA — A top Turkish general left here for Israel on Sunday to take part in strategic military cooperation talks with Israeli-and U.S. officials, the Anatolia news agency said.

General Cevik Bir, deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff, who is accompanied by a large group of Defense Industry officials, is also due to hold talks with Israeli authorities on the possible sale of several weapons systems, military sources said.

Senior U.S. military officials will for the first time join the next round of strategic military talks between Israel and Turkey due to be held in Tel Aviv on Monday, Israel radio reported last Thursday.

David Ivry, secretary general at the Israeli Defense Ministry, and Bir will represent their respective countries at the talks.

Meanwhile, Palestinians threw fire bombs at the Turkish consulate in East Bait-ul-Moqaddas on Sunday ahead of the Turkish deputy chief of staff's arrival in Israel to discuss weapons purchases, police said.

Three Palestinians were arrested for allegedly throwing the Molotov cocktails at the front yard of the consulate and at the consul's car, an Israeli police spokeswoman said.

Arafat Asks Blair to Help Save Peace Process

GAZA CITY — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat urged new British Prime Minister Tony Blair on Sunday to help pull the Middle East peace process out of a crisis.

Arafat asked Blair, whose Labor Party scored a stunning electoral victory on Thursday, "to play an active role in pulling the peace process out of the current crisis and putting it back on the rails," the Palestinian news agency Wafa said.

"The Palestinians greatly appreciate the support of Great Britain and the Labor Party for their right to an independent state with Jerusalem (Bait-ul-Moqaddas) as its capital," Wafa quoted Arafat as saying.

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have been on hold since Israel defied Palestinian and international condemnation and began building a new Jewish neighborhood on March 18 in historical Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas. (AFP)

Velayati to Visist Cairo

TEHRAN — Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mahmoud Mohammadi said here Saturday night that Iranian foreign minister is due to visit Cairo during next few days.

Ali Akbar Velayati will formally extend the invitation of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to attend the eighth summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) scheduled to be held in Tehran in December.

He added that Foreign Minister Velayati will also meet with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Moussa in Cairo and discuss issues of common interest.

Mohammadi said that Velayati will also submit president's letters of invitation to the heads of states of Yemen and Lebanon.

In meetings with Syrian officials, Velayati will review and exchange ideas on the latest situation in the Middle East region, he added.

(IRNA)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

CAR...

"The two blasts killed 15 people and wounded 23, including a child, badly hurt in the head and whose hand was blown off," the paper said.

It added that the blast was so powerful that "according to a medical source half those killed could not be identified."

Sidi Bouhanifia is a thermal resort about 20 km (12 miles) from Mascara. One bomb hit the Sahara Hotel destroying the building. A second, outside the hotel El Farah, caused widespread damage, the newspaper said.

There was no claim of responsibility for the attack but the authorities have blamed rebels for hundreds of bombs and other attacks over the past five years.

The attack was carried out just hours before Algerian President Liamine Zeroual, addressing his first popular rally since his election in 1995, said on Saturday his government has won over rebels.

Zeroual said the parliamentary election to be held on June 5 would be another "political victory" on the path to establish a multi-party democracy in Algeria.

Algeria has been torn by violence since shortly after the authorities in January 1992 cancelled a general election in which radicals had taken a commanding lead.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

QATAR...

They also underlined "the need for an equitable, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on the international resolutions."

Majali, who arrived here Saturday for a three-day visit with Energy Minister Mohamad Salah al-Hourani and Labor Minister Saleh Khassawneh, was received Sunday morning by the Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad ibn Khalifa al-Thani.

Their talks concerned ways of strengthening bilateral ties and the situation in the Middle East, QNA said.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

MOHAMMADI...

persons, guarantee the freedom of movement of citizens in all areas and help reconstruct Bosnia-Herzegovina, he added.

Incomplete execution of the terms of the accord will complicate the situation and lead to breakdown of the peace plan, he believed.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman said that separationist tendency of some factions is against the principles and objectives of Dayton accord and stressed Iran's support for the independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He concluded that Iran is still ready to take practical and effective steps towards ensuring objectives of peace along with international bodies and OIC members.

(IRNA)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

PAK...

hammad Forouzandeh and Chief of the Joint Staff of the Army, Major General Ali Shahbazi.

The Pakistani delegation will also inspect Iran's Air Force Training Center as well as the country's defense establishments.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

IRAN...

Expressing satisfaction over the growing trend of Iran-China relations, President Rafsanjani called for speeding up of the implementation of the agreements already reached between the two countries.

Lanqing conveyed Chinese president's warmest greetings to Rafsanjani and briefed him on the results of the talks he had with the Iranian officials.

Praising Iran's rapid development in economic, technical, political and trade fields, the Chinese official said that Iran and China shared traditional and cultural commonalties. Over the recent years, especially after the visit of President Rafsanjani to China, Tehran-Beijing ties are on an upward trend.

He expressed his country's readiness to boost economic, technical and trade cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

(Contd From Pg. 2)

36TH...

the norms and international law, Habibi pointed out that it is being constantly observed that some nations tend to pressurize the world community to adopt the intra-territorial laws of theirs as extra-territorial laws.

The vice president stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran intends to propose this issue as one of the other agenda at the commission.

Habibi further deduced that the matter of extra-territoriality of the law, according to international jurists and lawyers cannot be applied outside the national boundary of a nation. He added that such laws could only be enforced within the legal boundary of the nation.

The vice president added that according to the international laws, no country has the right to enforce its laws beyond its legal borders, practices and norms, adding that all the countries were bound to function within the frameworks of international laws outside their border limits unless prescribed by international codes.

Habibi pointed out that such a trend has severely been resisted by the international community. The Helm-Burton and d'Amato bills passed by the congress, were such instances of intra-territorial laws which the United States seriously insisted that they should be applied extra-territorially, he added.

The vice president also called on the world fora to severely stand against such unjust practices which is considered as violation of the constitutions of nations which spiritually and physically inflicts irreparable sufferings and miseries to the individuals.

According to another report, the commission in its session appointed the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif, as the rotatory chairman for one year.



Stage Set for Hearings on Damage Claims Against Opposition Member

SINGAPORE — A Singapore court will begin hearings Monday to determine the damages and legal costs that opposition politician Tang Liang Hong must pay for libelling the city-state's top leaders.

The high court has set aside five days for the hearings, during which Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew and nine other leaders of the Ruling People's Action Party (PAP) are expected to give evidence, lawyers said.

Tang, a lawyer and member of the Workers' Party, faces potential multi-million-dollar claims and court costs in the dozen lawsuits he lost in March when his defense was struck down after he failed to appear in court and heed orders to declare his assets.

PAP leaders had earlier gained an international injunction freezing all assets of Tang and his wife up to 11.2 million singapore dollars ($8 million) in order to cover the damages and court costs they plan to seek.

The legal action stems from a bitter campaign for January 2 general elections in which Tang, 63, accused PAP leaders of lying when they described him as an anti-Christian, anti-English "Chinese Chauvinist."

Tang, a prominent lawyer and Chinese cultural advocate, Ran under a Workers' Party ticket which took 45 percent of the vote in a hotly contested multiple-seat district where Goh had staked his reputation on a PAP victory.

Tang left Singapore immediately after the polls, citing death threats against him and his family. He is now reported to be in Malaysia.

"It is understood that Mr Tang is unlikely to appear at the hearing from tomorrow," the *Sunday Times* said.

The stage was set for the start of the damage assessment hearings when two lawyers for Tang who wanted to stop representing him in his legal tussle changed their minds Saturday.

The lawyers, Loo Ngan Chor and Peter Low, withdrew a court application to stop acting as Tang's counsel after he retracted remarks that had apparently put them in a bad light.

If the lawyers had quit, Tang may have been left without counsel to represent him in his legal battle.

Tang said in a statement published Saturday: "I have never doubted for a moment that my lawyers are men of courage in agreeing to act for me under the very special circumstances of my cases."

"If my remarks are 'offside' in any way, I unreservedly withdraw them completely," Tang said in a letter faxed to the *Straits Times* after meeting his lawyers in the Malaysian state of Johore, which neighbors Singapore.

Tang had charged that his lawyers chose not to file a 60-page affidavit responding to arguments made by Senior Minister Lee in a case last Monday. because they feared it contained allegations which could jeopardize their position as his lawyers.

(AFP)

S. African Analysts Criticize U.S. Role in Zaire

CAPE TOWN — The last-minute U.S. intervention to muscle the two sides in Zaire's civil war into a face-to-face meeting has upstaged South African President Nelson Mandela's months of quiet efforts to find a negotiated settlement.

U.S. envoy Bill Richardson announced in Kinshasa that President Mobutu Sese Seko would meet rebel leader Laurent Kabila on a South African ship in international waters off Zaire. The meeting is expected on Saturday, chaired by Mandela.

"This is an historic occasion that hopefully will lead to a peaceful transition in Zaire," Richardson, who is also the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters. He said Washington was proud to have been a "catalyst" in the search for peace.

Presidential spokesman Parks Mankahlana said South Africa welcomed Richardson's success — but emphasized it followed months of efforts by Mandela.

"Anyone who can make a contribution is welcome to join, but we must stress that there was never a point at which the peace process was derailed," he said.

Mandela has been herding Mobutu and Kabila toward a face-to-face meeting since February, when he hosted the first proximity talks between the warring sides. Aides say he has been in almost daily telephone contact with Mobutu, trying to ensure that the cancer-stricken dictator is allowed to go with dignity after 32 years in power.

Western diplomats have hailed Mandela's diplomacy as the possible beginning of an African renaissance, though some have said his moral authority outweighs his skill.

But while Mandela waited patiently for Mobutu's green light to announce a date and venue for talks already agreed in principle, Richardson flew in and made the announcement after brief meetings with the two sides.

South African analysts accuse the United States of muscling in after Mandela had virtually guaranteed a meeting between Mobutu and Kabila.

"South Africa was poised for a major foreign policy coup," said University of the Western Cape analyst Vernon Seymour.

"Here we essentially have an African initiative led by an African government trying to solve an African problem.

"The statement by Richardson, that the parties have agreed for the first time to direct face-to-face talks, borders on diplomatic plagiarism," he said.

Stellenbosch University Africa analyst Willie Breytenbach said Washington had barged in to claim the glory: "America is trying to muscle in because it is now quite clear that the Zaire crisis is ripe for a solution and it is clear that Mobutu is going to go."

South African officials resolutely refused to comment on Richardson's intervention, other than to say Mandela's priority remained the safety of Zaire's people.

"If there is a victory to be scored, it must be scored by Mobutu and Kabila. If there is a gain to be made, it must be made by the people of Zaire," said one government official.

But sources in the South African team conceded there was irritation at Richardson's announcement of a meeting they believe South Africa had set up.

"It would be preposterous to join the process in the last two days and claim credit for its success. Only a child would fall for that when it is clear that President Mandela has been working at this so long and so patiently," said one source. *(Reuter)*



Indonesia Enters Second Week of Election Campaign

JAKARTA — Indonesia entered its second week of electoral campaigning Sunday, after seven days of political violence that killed 27 and left more than 5o people injured.

The 27-day campaign period opened April 27 with violence in Medan, north Sumatra, when supporters of the country's main opposition, the Moslem-led United Development Party (PPP) clashed with the ruling Golkar Party, leaving three PPP members injured.

Violence between supporters of the two parties also flared in various towns in densely-populated Central Java, echoing tensions that have already led to clashes and scores of injured in previous weeks.

But the 27 deaths and 51 people injured were mostly due to traffic accidents during street convoys, armed forces spokesman Brigadier General Slamet Supriadi said on Friday.

In Pekalongan on the north coast, a PPP stronghold, an angry mob attacked and vandalized a village hall on April 30, while later on the same day PPP and Golkar backers clashed in the same town, leaving at least five people injured.

The clash broke out after PPP suporters stumbled on Golkar supporters who were removing PPP flags on the side of a road. A government office and five houses were damaged in the melee that followed.

Some 3,000 Golkar flags had disappeared from the streets of the town in the previous days.

On Wednesday the PPP's offices in Yogyakarta and nearby Kotagede were vandalized, pelted with stones by Golkar supporters.

Angry PPP supporters in Kotagede retaliated by damaging roadside lamps and flowerpots, setting up roadblocks and burning tyres in protest on Thursday.

The authorities' inaction has also led the Yogyakarta chapter to freeze campaigning there in protest.

"When our masses commit violations, the authorities make a big deal out of it. But when Golkar's masses do something wrong, they (the authorities) do nothing. We'd rather not campaign to avoid more clashes," PPP spokesman Usamah Hisam said.

In Yogyakarta, instead of campaigning, PPP supporters staged several mock funeral processions through the streets which had already been stripped bare from any PPP party signs as part of the protest.

They carried mock coffins they say symbolized the death of justice.

On the same day, Friday, some 21 PPP supporters were injured, including one of a stab wound, following two separate attacks on PPP campaign convoys in Pekalongan. Local PPP executives blamed Golkar supporters for the attacks.

In Jakarta, PPP chairman Ismail Hasan Metareum said Friday his party will not campaign in the capital that day because it had not received approval from the authorities, citing differences in the permissible size of the rallies.

Bereft of a place to rally, thousands of PPP supporters drove around the city. Scores were briefly detained at a central Jakarta police station and warned not to convoy around town.

In a separate outbreak of violence a PPP mass rally attended by some 5,000 people in Ujungpandang, south Sulawesi, Friday turned nasty after a power failure. The mob pelted a nearby electricity station, causing minor damages. No one was injured.

Violence has also hit the campaign of the country's other party, the small nationalist alliance Indonesian Democracy Party (PDI), opposing supporters of chairman Suryadi with those of former chairwoman Megawati Sukarnoputri.

The party's first rally in Surabaya, East Java, was marred by a brawl, as pro-Megawati supporters attempted to take over the campaign stage on April 28.

The violence prompted the local pro-Suryadi campaign organizer to decide to halt the party's campaign there until appropriate security assurances could be provided by the authorities.

Megawati, daughter of founding President Sukarno, was ousted in June as PDI chairwoman by a government-backed party faction, who then installed Suryadi as the new leader.

Suryadi remains unpopular amongst PDI masses nationwide and has had to travel under tight security as he has faced numerous demonstrations.

His faction's campaign in most towns in Java, where opposition from Megawati supporters is strongest, has been marked by low attendances and conducted under tight security guard. *(AFP)*

Fujimori's Shadowy Adviser Buoyed by Success of Hostage Rescue

LIMA, Peru — After years out of the public eye, Peru's mysterious, sinister intelligence chief has emerged to claim his share of the credit for the nation's daring hostage rescue.

But critics of Vladimiro Montesinos say he brought to the hostage raid the same ruthless efficiency that he brings against all his targets - whether rebels, opposition politicians or renegade spies in his own security forces.

For now, the success of the April 22 raid on the Japanese ambassador's mansion has taken some of the political pressure off Montesinos, President Alberto Fujimori's most influential and infamous adviser.

Montesinos, 51, helped orchestrate the surprise commando assault that ended the four-month hostage crisis. All 14 rebel hostage-takers, one captive, and two soldiers were killed. Seventy-one hostages were rescued.

Montesinos - an owlish-looking man with slicked-back hair - appeared at the compound after the raid to shake hands with triumphant soldiers. It was only the second public sighting of the reclusive intelligence chief in seven years.

"I've heard from military sources that the rescue was his idea," said Enrique Obando, an expert on the Peruvian military. By appearing in public after the raid, "Montesinos was trying to show people... that he still has Fujimori's backing."

But a poll released after the rescue shows 90 percent of Peruvians still want an investigation into Montesinos' intelligence agency, widely accused of torture, murder and other human rights abuses.

As Fujimori's security adviser, Montesinos is de facto chief of the intelligence services, which have played a key role in Fujimori's successful campaign against Peru's rebels.

Montesinos' climb to power has been notable for its sordidness.

Dismissed as an army captain, Montesinos was jailed for one year in the 1970s after being charged with selling military secrets. He later became a lawyer defending drug traffickers before linking up with Fujimori as his security adviser after the 1990 presidential election.

Just before the hostage rescue, a death squad Montesinos allegedly approved was linked to the torture of a female intelligence agent and the murder of another, whose corpse was found in a ditch - minus its head, feet and hands.

The women apparently were suspected of security leaks. Four agents have been charged in the killing and alleged torture.

In August, a confessed drug trafficker said that he paid Montesinos $50,000 a month to safeguard his cocaine shipments in the early 1990s. The man later recanted the testimony, saying he was "confused" the day he said it.

But that ugliness has been pushed aside, at least temporarily, amid the euphoria of the hostage rescue.

"I'm afraid the successful result of the raid is going to overshadow a lot of these accusations," Obando said.

In fact, Montesinos owes much of his staying power to the simple fact that he gets things done - and finds out vital information that Peru's police often miss.

Montesinos' agents warned Lima police before the Dec. 17 hostage-taking that Tupac Amaru rebels planned to seize a diplomatic site and take captives.

But police failed to act on the warning. On Wednesday, the government announced that 18 high-ranking police officers, including five generals, will be charged with criminal negligence.

Under Montesinos' command, Peruvian authorities have largely dismantled the Tupac Amaru group and crippled the larger, more vicious, Shining Path Guerrilla group with the capture of its leaders.

For Fujimori, who has made a lot of political enemies, a man like Montesinos - who isn't afraid to get his hands dirty - is vital.

"The intelligence apparatus is not only used to rescue hostages. It also is aimed against the (legal) opposition. There are telephone threats, break-ins, and torture," Obando said.

"These things shouldn't take place in a democracy." *(AP)*

Japan's Oldest Person Dies at 113

TOKYO — Japan's oldest person, Sue Utagawa, aged 113, died Sunday, her family said.

Utagawa died of natural causes at a hospital in Ube, western Japan, where she lived since turning 100 in 1984.

She passed away as if falling asleep, a family member reportedly said.

Her death makes Suekiku Miyanaga of Osumi, southern Japan, the nation's oldest person. Miyanaga turned 113 in April following Utagawa, who celebrated her birthday in January. (AFP)

Fiji Under Cyclone Alert

SUVA — Fiji was Sunday under a cyclone alert as an off-season tropical cyclone named June hovers over the northern parts of the island group, a weather forecasting center official said.

Late Sunday morning, June was located 280 kilometers (175 miles) north-northwest of the town of Nadi, where the weather center is located. The storm is moving very slowly.

The cyclone has average wind speeds of 90 kilometers per hour (55 miles per hour) close to its center with momentary gusts reaching 130 kilometers (80 miles). A gale warning has been issued for the northern and western areas of the country and a strong wind warning for the rest of the group.

The cyclone has caused widespread heavy rains, and is expected to cause flooding in low-lying areas.

In March cyclone Gavin hit Fiji killing at least 20 people and causing millions of dollars worth of damage. (AFP)



PARIS, France (May 3): Police forces try to catch a pink bubble of air, filled with petition, and to prevent some 1,000 demonstrators to head towards Paris townhall during a protest organized by two French environmental groups. The demonstrators, on foot, bicycles and rollerskates, marched through Paris, protesting against air pollution created by car traffic. (AFP PHOTO)

Rebel Leader Demands Zairean President Quit at Once

LUBUMBASHI, Zaire — Zairean rebel leader Laurent Kabila said on Sunday he was demanding the immediate resignation of Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko and assumed Mobutu was preparing to comply.

If Mobutu refused to step down, Kabila's rebel forces have orders to move into the teeming capital Kinshasa, he added.

Kabila was speaking to Reuters in Lubumbashi by telephone from the South African Navy vessel Outeniqua, minutes before Mobutu boarded the ship after long delays on both sides.

South African President Nelson Mandela has been on the ship since Friday, trying to bring the two leaders together and spare a bloodbath if the rebels attack Kinshasa.

Kabila said: "I have told President Nelson Mandela that Mobutu would have to resign immediately after our talks start. Otherwise my forces are under instructions to move into Kinshasa should he refuse."

"I have made it clear that there will be no other item on the agenda other than Mobutu's unconditional resignation. I hope he cooperates. Otherwise I will leave for home and my forces will move into Kinshasa without delay on Sunday night," he said.

A South African official aboard the ship said on Sunday that negotiators have brokered an agreement in principle for Mobutu to stand down after more than 30 years in power.

"There is an agreement in principle for Mobutu's resignation and the launching of a transitional process," the official, who asked not to be named, told reporters.

Mobutu, who has dominated the sprawling nation at the heart of Africa since seizing power in 1965, wore his distinctive leopard-skin hat as he boarded. Witnesses said he looked grim and sad. He held the hand of his wife Bobi Ladawa with one hand. In the other he held his usual carved walking stick.

But Kabila's forces, after a whirlwind campaign over the last seven months, have taken control of about three quarters of the country. Mobutu's foreign allies have abandoned him.

Asked about Mobutu's fate, Kabila said Mobutu could continue to live in Zaire. "We shall look after him. I am ready to guarantee his safety and that of his family so the man can live in Zaire in peace," he said. (Reuter)

30,000 Demonstrate Against U.S. Sanctions

RANGOON — An estimated 30,000 members of a Burmese government-sponsored Mass Movement on Sunday held a demonstration against a U.S. decision two weeks ago to clamp economic sanctions on Burma.

The rally, held amid tight security in a sports stadium in east Rangoon, was organized by the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), which is generally regarded as the political arm of Burma's ruling junta.

"This is a blatant interference in Myanmar's (Burma's) internal affairs using bullying tactics," a USDA spokesman said, calling the U.S. investment ban on April 22 an entirely "wrong decision."

"The U.S. government should understand that authorities here are striving to establish a disciplined democratic state," said another spokesman for the USDA, which was formed in 1988 and presently boasts a membership of six million.

A motion to condemn "internal and external destructionists" was also approved by the USDA gathering.

The USDA also accused the United States of failing to curb its own law and order problems, particularly widespread murder and rape.

"We invite the American government, which cannot even provide security or guarantee human rights for its own people, to come and take some much needed lessons from our government on how to provide security," one spokesman said.

The rally ended with cries of "Shame, Shame on the United States!" with spokesmen accusing Washington of having been swayed by the "falsehoods" spread by pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. (AFP)

Sri Lankan Tamil Rebels Bombard Northern Air Base

COLOMBO — Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger guerrillas bombarded a northern government air base, sparking an artillery duel in the early hours of Sunday, residents and military officials said.

"Most of the shells appeared to fall on the main military base. They were targeting the air force runway," said a resident in Vavuniya, 220 km (140 miles) north of Colombo. "We're unaware of the damage.

"Explosions rocked the area," he added. "We could hear the gunfire and the whine of shells flying through the air."

Army gunners at the Vavuniya base returned fire and the artillery duel, which began around 1.30 a.m., went on for about an hour, residents and military officials said.

Military officials said the air force had stopped parking aircraft at the base after a previous attack by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels using long-range guns captured in raids on army bases.

"We can't say if the attack caused any damage because we don't want the Tigers to know how accurate their firing was," a military official said.

The rebels, fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the mainly Sinhalese Indian Ocean island's north and east, fired about 30 shells, wounding a policeman and the principal of a school, he said.

The rebel artillery attack could be an effort to disrupt preparations by the military to open a land route to the northern Jaffna peninsula, through the north-central Wanni mainland, most of which is under rebel control, he said. (Reuter)

Pope John Paul II to Pay Historical Visit to Lebanon

BEIRUT — Pope John Paul II will make the first papal visit to the Middle East since 1964 next weekend when he arrives in Lebanon, home to the region's most important Catholic community.

The Pope, who begins a two-day visit on Saturday, had originally planned to visit Lebanon three years ago but the trip was cancelled after a church bombing north of Beirut which left 11 worshippers dead.

For his 77th international pastoral visit since his appointment in 1978, Pope John Paul II will find himself in the only country in the Middle East where Christians have an important role in government.

The pope has described Lebanon as "more than a country, a message," and during his visit he is due to sign the apostolic exhortation inspired by resolutions taken during the synod held for Lebanon in Rome in 1995.

The synod called for Israel's withdrawal from occupied parts of Southern Lebanon.

Despite assurances from the Vatican that the papal visit is only pastoral, it undoubtedly has a political dimension.

As well as religious meetings with all Lebanese Christian and Muslim leaders, the Pope will also meet with President Elias Hrawi, House Speaker Nabih Berri and Prime Minister Rafic Hariri.

But the highlight of the visit will be an open-air mass in the heart of war-devastated downtown Beirut to be attended by 250,000 people. (AFP)

Eight Syrian Children Wounded by Grenade

DAMASCUS — Eight Syrian children were seriously wounded near the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights when another child found an old grenade and tossed it to them, thinking it was a ball, the Syrian press reported Sunday.

The children, aged 7 to 11, were wounded Wednesday in Sanamein village about 10 kilometers (six miles) from the Golan by a grenade which dated back to the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the government newspaper *Tishrin* said.

Hospital officials said the children were in serious condition. (AFP)

600 Rescued After Boat Hits Coral Reef Off Southern Thailand

BANGKOK — More than 600 people were rescued Sunday when a ferry plying a popular tourist route between two islands in the Andaman Sea struck a coral reef and sank off the coast of southern Thailand, marine police said.

All the passengers on the King Cruiser, travelling from Phuket Island to the tiny resort island of Phi Phi, were rescued after marine police put out an emergency call to all boats in the area, police said.

The boat hit the reef around 16 kilometers (10 miles) from the coast, two hours after leaving harbor at 8:30 a.m. (0130 GMT) Sunday in Phuket, which is some 865 kilometers (520 miles) south of here.

Police said details about any injured people were not immediately available. Hospitals on Phuket by telephone from Bangkok reported one woman was treated for shock.

An employee of the boat owners, Song Serm Tours said there were a total of 620 passengers on the boat. They were taken by emergency lifeboats until help from marine police and fishing boats arrived. (AFP)

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South Asia Sits Down to Business on Trade Deal

COLOMBO — A delayed regional trade pact will be jump-started at the South Asian summit next week amid repeated calls to make the grouping more business-like, diplomats and officials here said.

The proposed preferential trade agreement is expected to figure prominently when heads of states and governments from seven nations in the region meet in the Maldives capital Male from May 12 to the 14th.

The idea of a preferential trade pact among the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) members was floated by Sri Lanka in 1991 in Colombo ago but there was little progress.

"Declarations are divine but the devil is in the detail," an Asian diplomat here said underscoring the tough bargaining and reluctance by several countries to grant tariff and non-tariff concessions to each other.

The SAARC seven — Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka — members have exchanged lists of commodities for which they agree to give preferential treatment but there has been no finality.

The South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) must be negotiated, concluded and ratified by members in the next seven months to set the stage for creating a South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) by the year 2000.

The frustrations due to delays in getting SAARC to work and improve the living conditions in this region which is home to 1,100 million people has been repeatedly highlighted by Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga.

"As SAARC enters its first decade, the results, I must confess, do seem meager," President Kumaratunga told the the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh Khaleda Zia who visited here in January 1995 as chairman of SAARC.

Economic analysts said poor progress of SAPTA was due to fears by smaller countries that their largest member, India, could swamp all other economies if trade barriers were dismantled overnight.

Four states in SAARC — Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal — qualify as least developed states (LDS) giving them a disadvantage in agreeing to blanket concessions to all SAARC members, analysts pointed out.

Pakistan had been fearful of its arch rival India dumping cheaply manufactured goods to cripple the local manufacturers while Sri Lanka has been constantly complaining the huge trade imbalance with India.

Sri Lankan exports to India were about $21 million last year compared to imports from India worth nearly $500 million, officials said adding that promised concesions by India were yet to materialize.

Indian Prime Minister who visited Colombo as foreign minister in January announced their unilaterally lifting tariff and quota barriers on 80 Sri Lankan commodities but what those items are is yet to be worked out.

Under the SAPTA terms, any concession given to one country must be extended to other member states and they must also agree not to impose new tariff and non-tariff barriers to inhibit intra-regional trade.

Sri Lanka President Kumaratunga has urged other SAARC nations to use India's huge domestic market as bait to attract big fish to the region.

Kumaratunga last year called for joint efforts to attract foreign capital to South Asia and offered to establish a bureau to promote investments in the region.

She said she was keen to turn Sri Lanka into the hub port of SAARC and make it a financial services center as trade barriers were progressively dismantled in the region.

International investors began to show interest in South Asia only after India started its economic liberalization process in recent years, she said.

The emerging world trade environment towards freer trade and regional trading blocks has given SAARC new meaning to get on with the business of promoting trade and investment, diplomats preparing for the summit said.

The private sector Trade and Commerce Chambers in South Asia are already lobbying governments to push SAPTA.

Some 60 business and commerce leaders from the region met in Pakistan's port city of Karachchi last month to finalize their proposed economic agenda for the ninth SAARC summit.

(AFP)

Stocks Hit Another Records as Labor TAkes Control of Britain

LONDON — Stock prices bounced to a record high and the British pound recovered from steep early losses, after the landslide victory by Britain's Labor Party gave financial markets only a brief case of the jitters Friday.

For now, traders apparently believe the new prime minister, Tony Blair, will stick to his promise of staying friendly to business and scrapping Labor's old pro-union, economy-meddling ways.

Markets had figured for months that Blair would beat Prime Minister John Major in Thursday's election. But the size of Labor's win, with roughly two-thirds of the seats in the House of Commons, caught people off guard.

Some prices fluctuated sharply in the morning, but many analysts including UK economist David Owen at the Investment Bank Dresdner Kleinwort Benson correctly saw the big moves as a knee-jerk overeaction that soon were rectified.

Stocks and sterling fell early Friday, with the pound showing big losses against the U.S. dollar and the German mark.

The pound had traded as low as $1.6001 early Friday, from $1.6248 late Thursday, but recovered to $1.6204 late in the day. Sterling had dropped to 2.7570 German marks, from 2.8034 marks late Thursday, but jumped back to 2.7994 marks late in the day.

The London stock market also dipped in the early going, but lost nowhere near the 50-plus points some analysts had guessed overnight.

The top market barometer, the Financial Times-stock exchange 100-share index, soon moved into positive territory. It closed with a gain of 10.6 points, or 0.2 percent, at 4,455.6, its second record finish in as many days.

There are still uncertainties ahead as the new prime minister's team begins running the country.

Gordon Brown, named Friday as Britain's Treasury chief, is widely expected to raise interest rates slightly at a meeting next Wednesday with Bank of England Governor Eddie George.

That might help the pound and hurt the stocks.

Labor has promised to impose a "windfall tax" on a number of industries that were privatized by Conservative Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and later Major — but Brown has been unclear about exactly which companies will get hit and how hard.

Shares in railtrack, which runs Britain's rail tracks, fell 5.4 percent on Friday as some investors decided it could be among the victims.

(AP)

Japan's Jobless Rate Hits Record High in Year to March

TOKYO — Japan's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate hit a record high of 3.3 percent on average in the year to March, rising by 0.1 percentage points from the previous year, a government agency said Friday.

But in March alone, the rate improved to 3.2 percent from 3.3 percent in February, the management and coordination agency said.

"The employment situation is still severe, but there are signs of improvement, such as an increase in the number of employed people," it said.

The number of the employed rose 0.9 percent from a year earlier to 65.12 million in the year to March, the agency said.

In a separate report released on Friday, Labor Ministry said the ratio of job openings to job seekers came to 0.72 in the year ended in March, improving from 0.64 in the preceding year.

Nobuyuki Saji, an analyst at Nikko Research Center, said the month-on-month drop in the jobless rate in March reflected moves to hire temporary workers to meet rushed demand ahead of the rise in the consumption tax on April 1.

(AFP)

Scams, Price Gouging Abound in Flood-Weary Winnipeg

WINNIPEG, Manitoba — As Winnipeggers endured the area's worst flooding in 145 years, exhausted residents were also finding themselves prey to scam artists and price gougers.

"I know this event 99.9 percent of the time brings out the best in people, but sometimes it brings out the worst," Manitoba Emergency Management Organization (MEMO) executive coordinator Harold Clayton said. "There are a lot of charities popping up and I've referred some to the police for investigation."

A 29-year-old Winnipegger faced 12 counts of fraud after police accused him of falsely claiming to be a fund-raiser for the Salvation Army. He solicited money from at least 12 residents of a northeast Winnipeg neighborhood this week.

"The criminals don't respect us in the best of times, so why would they in the worst?" Winnipeg Police Sergeant Carl Shier said.

Manitoba has suffered its worst flooding since 1852, with an area twice the size of Hong Kong under water and 29,000 Canadians displaced.

Offers of help have come in from all over North America and Europe in response to the flood, which Manitoba Premier Gary Filmon called the "largest civil disaster this century."

Soldiers were granted police powers on Saturday to assist Winnipeg police in patrolling evacuated neighborhoods, Mayor Susan Thompson said.

Even those Winnipeggers who were not evacuated became targets for price gougers capitalizing on fears high river levels could lead to sewer back ups in a sudden downpour of rain.

City hardware stores sold out quickly as worried homeowners telephoned coast-to-coast and into the United States to buy sewer backup valves priced between C$8 and C$22 (U.S.$6 and U.S.$16) each.

"The valve we bought was C$35 (U.S.$25) but they had to install it and it cost C$65 (U.S.$46) for a 10-minute installation," Winnipeg homeowner Francine Martin said.

"We could have done it ourselves, it was just four screws but they said they had no valves in store. There was a waiting list but their plumbers had valves they'd install for us," Martin said. "That's a lot of money, it's unfortunate that under the circumstances people are taking advantage of the situation."

There were reports of dubious call centers across western Canada and the southern United States, Memo's Clayton said.

"I got a call about a southern U.S. call center. When I called them I found out they do collect funds, but with a substantial management fee. we don't believe in that," he said.

There were also cases of looting reported in homes abandoned in the United States due to Red River flooding.

People in southern Saskatchewan complained to police when they were pressed by phone solicitors for their credit card numbers to pledge aid for Manitoba's flood victims.

"We just want to make sure the money doesn't go to scam artists," Royal Canadian Mounted Police Col. Wayne Christensen said. "It's unfortunate that there's unscrupulous people who take advantage of people at these times."

The Red Cross has been collecting donations on behalf of all aid agencies but does not solicit funds.

"We had heard some people were doing telephone solicitation in the name of the Red Cross and we heard of one or two people knocking on doors," Red Cross spokeswoman Judy Burwell said. *(Reuter)*

Sumatran Sorcerer May Have Killed Up to 42 Women

JAKARTA — An Indonesian sorcerer held by police in north Sumatra after the discovery of a woman's buried body may have killed up to 42 women, press reports said Sunday.

But police Sunday would only confirm the suspect, identified as Nasib Kelewang, alias Amat Saruji alias Datuk Maringgi, was being held over the killing of 16 women.

"He is being questioned about the 16 deaths," an officer on duty at Medan municipal station, in north Sumatra, said.

The 47-year-old has admitted killing 42 women since 1986, an unnamed police source told the *Republika* daily.

The *Kompas* daily said he may have killed up to 28 women, citing police sources in Medan. He admitted killing 16 women since 1990 alone, it added.

The daily published a list of names of 28 women who may have fallen victim to the sorcerer. Some of the women have been missing since as far back as 1986.

Senior police officers and the head of the police detective department could not be immediately reached for comment Sunday.

The state Antara news agency reported Saturday Kelewang admitted to killing 19 women since 1992.

The killings may have been part of an attempt to master strong black magic powers, both *Kompas* and Antara said. He claimed he had to kill 27 women and drink their saliva to achieve his goal.

His victims, all strangled to death, were women clients who had sought his help to make themselves more attractive to their husbands or boyfriends, he reportedly admitted.

The *Jakarta Post* daily said two of his three wives, who are sisters, were also arrested on suspicion of knowledge of some of the killings.

It added most of the victims were prostitutes, and their disappearances went unnoticed for years because none of their family members were concerned about their fate.

"Some of the bodies I buried but there are also several that I just threw into the river," Kelewang told police, the *Republika* reported.

The bodies of at least nine women, who have not yet been identified, have been found in the nearby Ular River in the past five years.

Kelewang was arrested after a woman's body was found buried in a sugar cane field in Sei Semayang, some 16.5 kilometers (10 miles) from Medan on Monday. The woman was last seen by a friend at the suspect's home.

A police search near the suspect's house yielded two more bodies and a macabre buried cache of some 25 women's watches, bags and cloths.

Medan police have been interrogating the suspect and searching for the other bodies, the chief of the Medan Police Colonel Primanto said, according to *Kompas*.

The search for more bodies has been hampered by the thousands of curious onlookers who crowded the area to watch the police in action. *(AFP)*

New Delhi Authorities Ban Ice Cream at War Memorial

NEW DELHI — New Delhi authorities have banned ice cream trolleys and elephant rides at a British-built memorial in a drive to spruce up the capital's imposing Kingsway, officials said Saturday.

"The New Delhi Municipal Council is going to come down heavily on the litterbugs," Imtiaz Khan, chief of the city's civic body, said Saturday.

Khan said mobile courts would prosecute food and ice cream vendors and owners of elephants, horse and camels if they ventured on to the Kingsway where the 42-meter (138-foot) India Gate war memorial is located.

The redstone India Gate, which bears the names of 85,000 Indian soldiers killed in World War II, is a favorite picnic spot for thousands of city dwellers who cannot afford a weekend outside Delhi.

The Kingsway, flanked either side by ornamental ponds, is also popular among foreign tourists visiting the Indian capital.

"Greening of the area takes years. Shrubs, tree branches and grass disappears overnight because of the elephants, camels and horses brought to India Gate for joyrides," Khan said.

The civic body chief said he would invcive the police in his drive to clean up the Kingsway, at one end of which is the presidential palace, built for viceroys when India was a British colony. *(AFP)*

Crazy-Cola Challenges Coke in Deepest Siberia

"Crazy Cola is laughing both at Coca-Cola and ourselves."

KRASNOYARSK, Russia — Sold at every stall, present on every table and advertised on television throughout western Siberia, locally-made Crazy Cola is waging a plucky David and Goliath battle against the giant Coke.

Last year Coca-Cola set up a factory at Krasnoyarsk, 4,000 kilometers (2,500 miles) from Moscow and the same distance from Vladivostok. Three months ago local manufacturer Pikra responded with Crazy Cola, encouraging consumers to drink Russian rather than American.

"Crazy Cola is laughing both at Coca-Cola and ourselves," said Pikra boss Yevgenia Kuznetsova to explain the name of the Soda, which tastes somewhat like its rival.

"We know that a small regional firm has a hard job to fight a multinational."

"But I am on my home ground," added Kuznetsova, who is a graduate of a U.S. business school and has worked at Coke's great U.S. foe Pepsi-Cola in Minneapolis.

Since March Pikra has sold 400,000 liters of Crazy Cola, she said.

Founded as a brewery in 1875 — its name derives from Piyevo, the Russian for beer, and Krasnoyarsk — Pikra is one of modern Russia's success stories.

When she took over as the head of the company in 1987, it was in a deplorable state, Kuznetsova said. "The equipment was out of date and a third of the 400 employees were drunks."

Now Pikra is regional market leader in non-alcoholic drinks, including lemonade, mineral water and fruit juices, while still producing 13 different types of beer of varying strengths.

This month the company is opening its fourth Pikra bar in Krasnoyarsk, an industrial city of one million inhabitants.

"It's often impossible to get into these pubs, they are so packed," said Tatiana Kovalchuk, spokesman of the regional administration and a self-confessed Pikra Fan.

Pikra's annual production of 30 million liters of beer is distributed throughout Siberia and this year the company began to form its own transport firm.

Profits in 1996 came to $5 million, as much as it had borrowed over the past three years to finance its modernization, while the workforce has risen to 900, half of them sales staff.

Furthermore they are paid on time, a rare thing in Russia, receiving an average of some 2.2 million rubles ($350), well above the national rate.

Pikra's board has 15 members, but only two of them are men.

Kuznetsova, an innovator, regularly invites foreign experts to visit the company, as well as psychologists to advise the employees of the need to keep sober when working in a brewery.

Coca-Cola's Krasnoyarsk head, Sitos Reyes, says he is not afraid of competition from Pikra. After all, he sold six million liters of Soda in central Siberia in just six months or so last year.

But he admitted: "They are very strong, particularly in soft drinks."

Profits in 1996 came to $5 million, as much as it had borrowed over the past three years to finance its modernization, while the workforce has risen to 900, half of them sales staff.

Kuznetsova meanwhile hopes that Russia will regain its former taste and reputation for quality drinks made from natural ingredients, including lemonade, beer and kvass, which is made from fermented bread. *(AFP)*

Paris Protestors March Against Car Pollution

PARIS — More than 1,000 demonstrators marched through Paris Saturday, protesting against air pollution created by car traffic in the French capital.

The group. on foot, bicycles and roller-skates, headed from Place de la Bastille in the east of the city to the central Palais Royal carrying banners declaring "cycling — c'est la vie!" and "the car's worse than the clap!"

Dominique Voynet, a spokeswoman for the two environmental groups organizing the protest said France's politicians "rarely take the metro (subway) and rarely take their children to the creches in the morning in strollers (prams) which put their noses in the exhaust pipes. It's highly unlikely they are aware of how serious the problem is."

Calling for changes to air-pollution laws, she said "The car responsible for the pollution should stay in the garage."

Some protestors were carrying multi-colored exhaust pipes which they intended to set up as a symbol of their demands near Paris Mayor Jean Tiberi's office in the City Hall.

Should Paris' pollution exceed acceptable limits, the city's authorities have an emergency plan ready which involves banning half the cars from taking to the road, according to their number plates. On odd dates, cars with odd numbers only can enter, on even days, even numbers only.

While it has not yet been used, a peak in the level of nitrogen dioxide in Paris on Thursday approached risk levels before a light wind caused the gas to dissipate. *(AFP)*

Jury to Decide on Dead Smoker's Family Compensation

JACKSONVILLE, Florida — Comparing cigarettes to "candy with razor blades inside," a lawyer urged jurors to send a tobacco giant a message and make it pay for causing a lifelong smoker's lung cancer and death.

But an attorney for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., maker of the Winston and Salem cigarettes Jean Connor Preferred, said in his closing argument Friday that the case is about a woman who knew the risks and chose to smoke anyway.

"They want to send a message you can only send if you ignore your common sense," said Reynolds attorney Paul Crist. "This case is not about messages at all. This case is about Jean Connor. This case is about decisions she made throughout her lifetime."

The jury of three ex-smokers, two nonsmokers and a current smoker deliberated two hours in the wrongful death case Friday afternoon before going home for the weekend. Mrs. Connor's two sons and a daughter are seeking "multiple millions" in damages.

"Reynolds had actual knowledge that its products were harmful — dangerous," said Norwood "Woody" Wilner, one of the family attorneys. "It sells candy with razor blades inside to anyone who wants to buy it and then they say they shouldn't have bought it."

The widely watched wrongful-death trial over Mrs. Connor's death in 1995 at age 49 is the first liability test for tobacco companies since they losing a case in August to the same attorney.

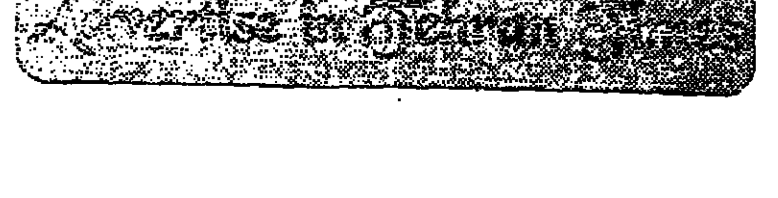
Wilner, who won the landmark $750,000 verdict against Brown and Williamson last year, asked jurors to rule cigarettes were unreasonably dangerous and defective.

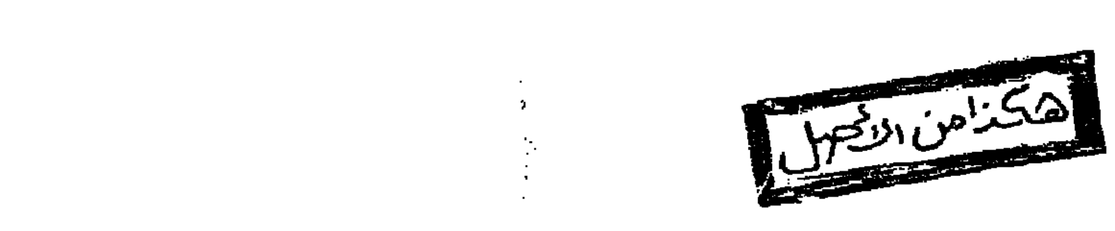
"Who made it cool to smoke poison?" he asked. "She died prematurely, and it wasn't right."

With help from newly disclosed company documents, Wilner claimed Reynolds was aware of the dangers of smoking for decades but concealed the truth from the public.

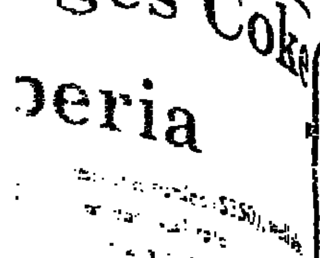
Mrs. Connor was lured into smoking as a teenager by the industry's glamorous images and already was addicted when warning labels first appeared on cigarettes, he said.

In videotapes shown to the jury, the frail, gaunt, bald woman testified she smoked up to three packs a day. She quit in 1993, a month before she was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer, which spread to her brain, liver and spinal cord. *(AP)*





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Study: Chemotherapy Damages Sperm Chromosomes

WASHINGTON — Chemotherapy can temporarily damage chromosomes in human sperm, a new study says.

Conducted by the Lawrence Livermore laboratory in California, the study published in the journal *Nature* genetics concludes that men who undergo the treatment should not procreate while getting the cancer treatment.

Researchers found that the incidence of sperm containing one too many or one too few chromosomes was five times greater during the treatment than before.

The rate returned to normal about 100 days after the end of treatment, the study said.

The study focused on patients with hodgkin disease, which afflicts the lymph system and can extend to the viscera. Samples of sperm were studied before, during and after the treatment.

One too many or too few chromosomes can cause miscarriages and malformations such as down syndrome.

(AFP)

Cell Defect May Lead to Heart Failure

WASHINGTON — Researchers said last week they had unlocked a cause of heart failure by discovering that untreated high blood pressure causes heart cells to expand and trigger a chain of cardiac problems.

Scientists have long known that high blood pressure can cause heart disease, heart failure, and stroke but the new findings by a team led by University of Maryland physiologist Dr. Jonathan Lederer helps explain why that occurs at the cellular level.

When blood pressure is high, heart cells enlarge. At first glance, this may seem like a healthy adaptation to a problem but in fact it is a hidden, and deadly, defect.

"We were interested in heart failure, pressure overload or hypertension. We knew it was a messy, messy field," he said in a telephone interview.

"The blood pressure goes up, the heart hypertrophies (gets oversized), failure develops."

A normal heartbeat follows electrical-chemical signals, expanding and contracting. But in people with high blood pressure, signals are muffled and cells do not properly contract.

Lederer and his colleagues were able to study this process at the cellular level in rats, pinpointing where the contraction mechanism breaks down in cells. Their findings appear in recent edition of the *Journal Science*.

"Because of our improved understanding of the molecular defects that develop in heart failure, it may be possible to develop novel drugs, molecular therapies or treatment programmes to treat this devastating disease," he said.

He added that the findings give even more urgency for people to have their blood pressure checked and, if necessary, treated promptly. Later treatment may be able to control the blood pressure but may not be able to reverse the damage.

"I think people tend to think of high blood pressure as something that can be reversed and controlled. But it has to be controlled before the damage is done," he said.

(Reuter)

THOUGHT

WHAT we call reality is an agreement that people have arrived at to make life more livable.

PRAYER

Noon	13:01
Evening	20:15
Dawn (tomorrow)	04:22
Sunrise (tomorrow)	06:08

HEALTH CAPSULES®
by Michael A. Petti, M.D.

DOES EARWAX INTERFERE WITH YOUR HEARING?

3-12 JUD HURD © 1992 UFS, Inc.

ORDINARILY NOT, UNLESS THE WAX COMPLETELY OBSTRUCTS THE EAR CANAL.

Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1525 - Peasants' revolt in south Germany is suppressed.

1646 - British forces under King Charles I surrender to Scots at Newark, England.

1762 - Russia and Prussia sign treaty of St. Petersburg, under hich Russia restores all conquests and forms defensive and offensive alliance.

1821 - France's Napoleon Bonaparte dies in exile on island of St. Helen.

1824 - British troops take over Rangoon, Burma.

1931 - People's National Convention in Nanking, China, adopts provisional constitutuion.

1936 - Italian forces occupy Addis Ababa, ending Abyssinian (Ethiopian) war.

1961 - Astronaut Alan Shepard Jr., first U.S. space explorer, is rocketed 185 kilometers into space from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

1963 - Algerians' Foreign Minister Mohammed Khemisti dies three weeks after being wounded by assassin's bullet.

1964 - Israel announces that first water is flowing from its new pipeline from Sea of Galilee to Negev Desert, despite Arab objections to the project.

1978 - Red brigades in Italy announce they are carrying out death sentence against former Premier Aldo Moro, whose body is found two days later.

1988 - French asault team storms cave in French Pacific territory of Noumea, New Caledonia, and frees 22 gendarmes and procescutor held hostage by Melanesian separatists.

1989 - Estonia's Communist Party removes 22 party leaders in sweep that gives greater strength to reformers.

1990 - So-called "two-plus-four" talks on German unification, involving Britain, France, Soviet Union, United States and both Germanies, open in Bonn.

1991 - President Bush remains hospitalized with an irregular heartbeat.

1992 - North and South Korea open talks on implementing historic accords.

1993 - A religious party threatens to bolt Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government, a move that could topple his ruling coalition and upset the Middle East peace talks.

1994 - Warplanes from north and south attack cities in Yemen's civil war.

SCRABBLE® BRAND GRAMS

G_2 R_1 A_1 M_3 S_1

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Letters	Scoring	
N_1 P_3 X_8 I_1 N_1 R_1 J_8	Triple Word Score	RACK 1
F_4 S_1 E_1 I_1 I_1 M_3 R_1	4th Letter Double	RACK 2
H_4 D_2 A_1 E_1 C_3 P_3 R_1		RACK 3
C_3 E_1 I_1 H_4 N_1 W_4 N_1		RACK 4

PAR SCORE 125-135

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

4-24-95

SCRABBLE® BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

Word	Rack	Score
V_4 E_1 X_8 E_1 D_2 L_1 Y_4	RACK 1	113
C_3 A_1 U_1 G_2 H_4 T_1	RACK 2	24
D_2 O_1 U_1 B_3 L_1 Y_4	RACK 3	12
F_4 E_1 R_1 V_4 E_1 N_1 T_1	RACK 4	63
H_4 O_1 R_1 I_1 Z_{10} O_1 N_1	RACK 5	107

PAR SCORE 200-210 — JUDD'S TOTAL 319

4-25-95

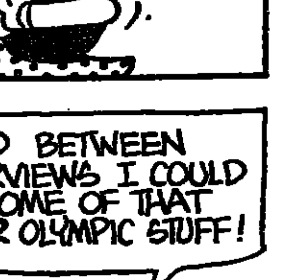




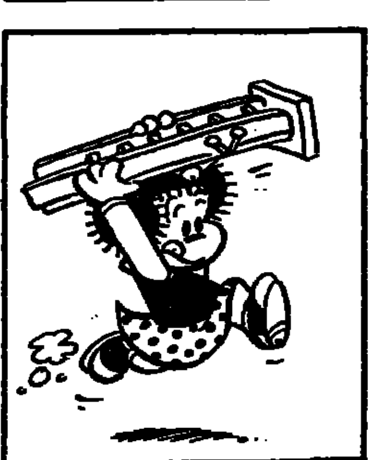




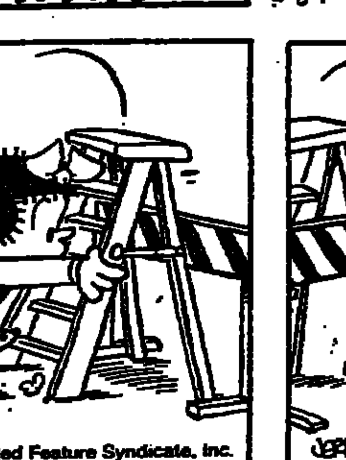


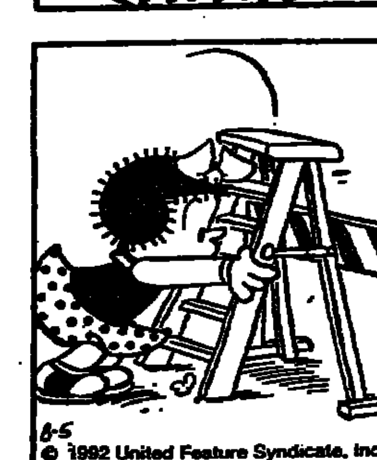








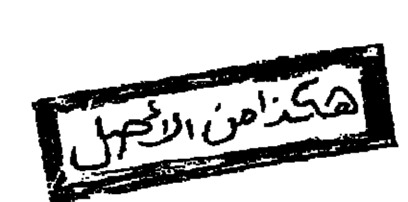




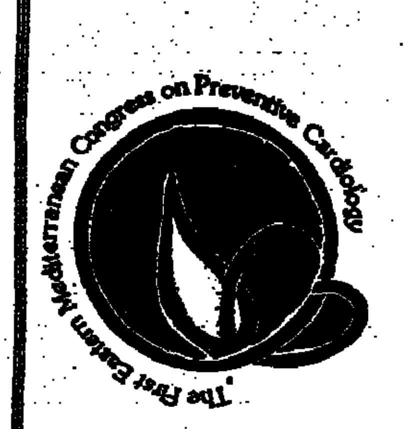








هكذا من الأصل



Inauguration of the First Eastern Mediterranean Congress on Preventive Cardiology & 10th Annual Iranian Congress of Cardiovascular Disorders in Isfahan

ISFAHAN - IRAN, MAY 2-5, 1997

Prevention of C.V.D: Time for Action

پیشگیری از بیماریهای قلبی عروقی: از علم تا عمل

The First Eastern Mediterranean Congress on Preventive Cardiology and 10th Annual Iranian Congress of Cardiovascular Disorders was held in a grand ceremony attended by Dr. Alireza Marandi, minister of health,



Dr. Marandi

treatment and medical education, Ms. Fatemeh Hashemi Rafsanjani, head of Special Diseases Foundation, Isfahan governor general, Dr. Nouhi, chairman of Iranian Heart Association, managing director of Social Insurance Organization and university professors and some 700 domestic specialists and researchers and 100 foreign cardiovascular experts at the Cardiovascular Research Center of Isfahan Medical Sciences University.

Dr. Jamshidi, dean of Medical College of Isfahan University, welcomed the guests and said due to the high rate of cardiovascular diseases in the country, an examination and exchange of opinion about cardiovascular diseases among Iranian and foreign experts for preventive cardiology was significant.

He said, "Change of living patterns by direct education of people from early childhood and change of social behavior and identification of patients before the diseases become advanced and chronic, were important topics of the congress."

Jamshidi expressed hope that the result of the congress will be followed up and implemented by the related experts and officials.

Dr. Alireza Marandi then read President Rafsanjani's message to the First Eastern Mediterranean Congress on Preventive Cardiology and 10th Annual Iranian Congress of Cardiovascular Disorders as follows:

"From ancient times the great Islamic Iran has been the cradle of science and scholars from all over the world flocked to Iran to learn science.

"Among different sciences, Muslim scholars paid special attention to medical sciences which enjoyed a special status in Iran, and for many years books and scientific discoveries of renowned Iranian doctors such as Avicenna, Farabi, Razi, Ibn Nafis, etc. were considered valid and worthy sources in East and West and they contributed greatly to the development of medical sciences.

"By launching important programs for enforcement of social justice and a comprehensive development in the economic, social and cultural branches aimed to revive the Islamic civilization, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken big steps toward the advancement of the nation.

"The giant measures taken by the Islamic Republic for improvement of health and medication and control of contagious and non-contagious diseases and supporting the vulnerable masses of the community has been so wide and glorious that has been applauded by the World Health Organization and other medical institutions around the world. Iran's progress in medical sciences is an important indicator of this development.

"The progress of medical sciences in Iran has been to such extent that besides training cardiovascular specialists, cardiologists and medical professors in the medical universities within the country, the Islamic Republic is not any more in need of dispatching patients to foreign countries for medical treatment. The most sophisticated surgical operations such as cardiovascular operations and treatment of heart diseases without surgical operation is successfully being performed by Iranian physicians.

"The present congress held at a time when proper attention is being paid to the health and prevention and treatment of heart diseases has become more and more important than in the past due to the special condition of nutrition and life of mankind.

"We hope that this congress will take important steps toward scientific and human achievements and will be a suitable forum for exchange of the latest scientific findings related to heart.

"We wish every success for the organizers and participants of the First Mediterranean Congress on Preventive Cardiology and the Tenth Congress on Cardiovascular Disorders."

Referring to the medical achievements made by the Islamic Republic in recent years, Minister of Health Dr. Marandi said, "During recent years, we have succeeded to establish 23 specialized and 20 super-specialized branches in the country."

"Compared to the pre-Revolution era, the number of beds in hospitals has been doubled and availability of 100 thousand hospital beds in the country at present is an important indicator of progress," said Marandi.

The minister said each year 50 million patients are dying in the world of which 12 million suffer from cardiovascular diseases. Among developing nations, out of 39 million mortalities 9 million die of cardiovascular complaints.

Referring to the danger of spreading cardiovascular diseases and the high cost of treatment of such diseases, the health minister said the Islamic Republic is spending approximately 15 billion rials a year for treatment of cardiovascular diseases and 60 billion rials worth of drugs for such diseases is sold to the patients. Also each year 50 million dollars medical equipment are being imported to the country.

He said due to high cost of treatment of cardiovascular diseases the best feasible method of treatment is preventive cardiology by giving necessary education to people, changing food diet and reducing the number of patients suffering from such diseases.

The giant measures taken by the Islamic Republic for improvement of health and medication and control of contagious and non-contagious diseases and supporting the vulnerable masses of the community has been so wide and glorious that has been applauded by the World Health Organization and other medical institutions around the world.



Congress President Dr. Masoud Pour Moqaddas made a detailed comparison of scientific, expertise and research achievements compared to the pre-Revolution era and Iran's remarkable medical rank compared to advanced nations in the world.

Thanks to the endeavors of our devoted and expert physicians, the Islamic Republic has attained a very high credit in medical sciences in all fields and this is due to the sagacity of the administrations of the nation who have launched big health and treatment projects in the country.

He expressed hope that alongside the congress an association of Muslim states within the Mediterranean region called the Association of Preventive Cardiology will be established.



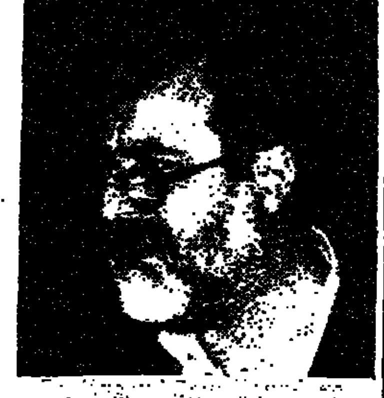
Dr. Sarafzadegan, congress secretary

The next speaker Dr. Sarafzadegan welcomed the distinguished guests and participants in the congress and said, "This congress which is convened for the first time in Iran is held every other year in one of the Mediterranean regional states," and then presented detailed statistics and valid data on the number of patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases in Iran and other countries.

Noting to the cultural and social commonalties between the nations of the region, Sarafzadegan stressed the significance of holding such a congress in order for physicians to achieve new methods of diagnosis of cardiovascular diseases.

She said more than 700 domestic specialist physicians and 100 foreign cardiovascular experts from 25 nations of Europe, Asia and America continents are attending the congress and 300 dissertations have been received by the congress secretariat.

An exhibition of latest advancements in the field of medical equipment by manufacturers of medical equipment for diagnosis of cardiovascular diseases and another exhibition attended by some domestic and foreign cardiovascular associations for displaying the latest medical achievements and researches are held alongside the congress for the interested parties," said Sarafzadegan adding that the Academic and Executive Committee of the congress will present ten prestigious awards to authors of ten top articles selected by the jury.



Dr. Masoud Pour Moqaddas, congress president

The next speaker, Dr. Nouhi, chairman of Iranian Heart Association, presented some statistics of patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases in Iran and the amount of money spent for their medication.

Dr. Nouhi made a comparison between the cost of preventive cardiology and the expenses of treatment of heart diseases and stressed on the need for research on prevention of such diseases.

He expressed hope that by implementing careful scientific policies in the community the number of mortalities resulting from cardiovascular diseases will be reduced considerably in the country.

The Eastern Mediterranean Congress on Preventive Cardiology is convened biannually in one of the Mediterranean countries and this is the first time it is being held in Iran. Besides prominent cardiovascular specialists and cardiologists, individuals specializing in neurology, pediatrics, gynecology, psychology and general practitioners are attending the joint congresses which opened in Abbasi Hotel, Isfahan, on May 2 bearing the emblem of "From Theory to Practice," will end on May 5.

Automakers Made Big Quality Gains in '97

DETROIT — Automakers dramatically improved the quality of their new cars and trucks in the 1997 model year, according to the latest initial quality survey of buyers by J.D. Power and Associates.

Once again, Japanese models dominated the list of the highest ranking cars and light trucks. But the market research firm said recently there were major gains industrywide.

Once again, Japanese models dominated the list of the highest ranking cars and light trucks. But the market research firm said recently there were major gains industrywide.

The firm surveyed 43,752 owners of 1997 vehicles after three months of ownership, asking them to detail defects and other problems with their new car or truck in 89 areas.

The average number of problems per 100 vehicles dropped to a record low of 86, down 22 percent from 110 for the 1996 model year — the largest drop since J.D. Power began the survey a decade ago.

Among cars, the average number of problems per 100 vehicles fell to 81 from 100; for trucks, it plummeted to 92 from 123. It was the first time that all three averages fell below 100, or less than one problem per vehicle.

"While there have been incremental improvements in vehicle quality over the past 10 years, the 1997 results reveal that the automobile industry is providing far superior quality than ever before," said Stephen C. Goodall, president of J.D. Power in Agoura Hills, California.

The biggest gains were among some of the highest-volume cars. Typically, the top scores are posted by high-priced luxury cars that are produced in relatively low numbers.

"What we are now seeing is the ability of manufacturers to take what they have learned in producing high-quality, low-volume vehicles and apply these concepts to the production of high- volume vehicles," said Chance Parker, the firm's product research director.

J.D. Power also said the quality gap between cars and light trucks largely vanished in 1997 because of big gains in the new crop of pickups and midsize sport utility vehicles. Ford's redesigned F-series pickups, for example, scored 64 problems per 100 units, compared with 114 for the 1996 model.

But significantly poorer scores still exist within other segments of the truck market, such as minivans and small and large sport utilities, Parker said.

The firm releases only the top three ranking vehicles in each of 11 car and truck categories.

Among the 33 top-ranking vehicles, 24 have Japanese nameplates and nine are big three products. Some of the Japanese models, such as the Honda Civic and Accord and Nissan pickup, are made in the United States. No European vehicles made the list.

Toyota had the most top-ranked vehicles with 11, followed by Honda with seven, General Motors with six, Nissan with five, Ford with three and Chrysler with one.

In recent years, the big three have noted their improving scores while disputing the significance of their lower overall ranking compared with the Japanese. They say the differences have become statistically insignificant.

"This study continues to confirm that quality is no longer a major discriminator and that key satisfaction factors ... are now such things as styling, features, safety, price and the dealer showroom and service experience," said Ron Haas, GM vice president of quality.

Parker said the origin of the vehicle is less significant today that it was years ago. He noted that quality scores vary more today model by model — most automakers have some that score high and others that rank low.

J.D. Power sells its survey information to automakers and others in the industry. Manufacturers use the information in advertising and to compare with their own quality and customer- satisfaction measures. (AP)

China Water Project to Tame Yellow River 'Monster'

XIAOLANGDI, China — What do you do with a river that rises 10 cm (four inches) a year and already looms perilously over cities that sit under the shadow of the dikes that hold it in?

China believes the answer, at least for now, is its multi-billion dollar Xiaolangdi dam project, in the central province of Henan.

Through the centuries, deposits of silt have raised the bed of the Yellow River so high that its waters now look down upon many cities and towns along its banks.

"In the past, hundreds of years the dikes have been raised many times so that the river is higher than the surrounding area in many places," said Wang Xianru, deputy director of the Yellow River Water and Hydropower Development Corp.

Beijing spends $1.2 billion each decade on shoring up the banks to keep at bay the threat that could claim tens of millions of lives should the river burst its dikes.

Some 4,000 villages were wiped out and untold millions of peasants drowned in 1938 when nationalist leader Chiang Kai-Shek ordered the dikes blown up to try to halt advancing Japanese invaders.

Complex Dam to Buy Time

At the core of the $4.17 billion project near Henan's capital Zhengzhou is a 154-meter (500-ft) rock and earth-filled dam laced with a complex web of 16 tunnels that also thread through the river's left bank.

The tunnels are intended to regulate the river's huge silt load and erratic water flow.

"Electricity generation is only a lesser priority of the Xiaolangdi project, with flood control being first," said Wang, whose company is in charge of the project.

Engineers spent 30 years designing the dam, which will be the largest of its kind in China. It is far more intricate than its much bigger, more expensive and highly publicized cousin at the three gorges on the Yangtze River.

"The project has several characteristics, one of which is its complexity," Wang said, gesturing to the 14.5-meter-wide (47-ft) tunnels that burrow more than one km (3,300 ft) through a hill on the left bank of the river.

"The rock conditions here are not very good, so it is very difficult to proceed with the job," he said.

A vast 12.5 billion-cubic-meter (441 billion-cubic-ft) reservoir behind the dam is to serve as a catch basin for silt and will be capable of holding 7.5 billion cubic meters (265 billion cubic ft) of sediment before it finally fills up after about 30 years.

What happens then?

Wang said he hoped the temporary halt in the flow of silt would buy time to come up with a more permanent solution. "At that time, our children will think of something to do," he said.

Pacifying "China's Sorrow"

The reservoir would also allow dam operators to regulate the Yellow River's notoriously fitful flow, which fluctuated between a dawdling 1,500 cubic meters (53,000 cubic ft) per second and a raging 16,000 cubic meters (565,000 cubic ft) per second, Wang said.

Although water levels are now at record lows, the river has claimed tens of millions of lives over the centuries, earning it the moniker "China's Sorrow".

The World Bank is helping to bankroll Xiaolangdi because the project was deemed too risky to attract private investment, said Pieter Bottelier, chief of the World Bank's China mission.

Water Use to Pay for Dam

The project would use more than $1.109 billion in foreign funds, with $1 billion of that coming from a World Bank loan and the remainder from foreign commercial credits, Wang said.

Six 300-megawatt generators would go on line between 1999 and 2001 to help slake central China's growing demand for energy, said Wang.

Wang's company has already signed a $55.8 million contract with German firm J.M. Voith Ag for the turbines and will issue tenders in October for more than $44 million worth of auxiliary equipment such as a computer control system. (Reuter)

Fire's Aftermath: Erosion Threatens Archaeological Sites

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico — Archaeologists at Bandelier National Monument and the adjacent Santa Fe National Forest are worried.

A fire last spring that burned more than 16,000 acres (6,500 hectares) and stripped away ground cover was followed by heavy flooding, damaging valuable evidence of human settlement dating back as far as 9500 B.C. this spring's snow melt and summer rains could cause further harm.

Mountain snow will be melting, rushing down canyons. Summer thunderstorms will unleash their fury on the barren landscape. Water will cut or trickle through archaeological sites. Come winter, water will freeze, rocks will crack.

"We can't save all of them," said Elizabeth Mozzillo, park archaeologist with the National Park Service at Bandelier, referring to the hundreds of archaeological sites within the burned areas.

"We're dealing with rapidly accelerating erosion," she added.

Last April's dome fire — which flared from an abandoned campfire — burned 16,516 acres (6,684 hectares) of pinon, juniper, ponderosa pine and mixed conifer trees in the Jemez mountains of northern New Mexico near Los Alamos.

Severely burned areas stripped the thin top soil of erosion protection — grass, brush, trees and an organic layer containing their seeds.

"We experienced major flooding last year, and we've been told it apparently will be worse this year," Mozzillo said.

Mountain snow will be melting, rushing down canyons. Summer thunderstorms will unleash their fury on the barren landscape. Water will cut or trickle through archaeological sites. Come winter, water will freeze, rocks will crack.

The burned landscape included 4,779 acres (1,934 hectares) in Bandelier, 3,092 acres (1,251 hectares) in the adjacent dome wilderness — for which the fire was named — and the remainder in the Jemez Ranger District of the Santa Fe National Forest.

The scorched area in bandelier included 422 known archaeological sites, although there could be as many as 600 within the fire perimeter.

Mozzillo said 298 sites have been examined since the fire; 172 were burned and 48 required immediate treatment — mainly for erosion control.

"Things like building check dams, masonry dams, people putting in erosion breaks, reseeding with native seeds," Mozzillo said. "We also used geo-textiles — mats of fibrous materials are laid down."

Charisse Sydoriak, chief of resources management at Bandelier, said at least eight other sites need immediate attention.

"The fire itself didn't do a whole lot of damage to the sites. It's the fire's aftereffects — erosion, things like that."

And four to six additional sites — such as stone one-room field houses or terraces — need emergency excavation.

A full assessment of sites will have to wait until the snow melts and the ground thaws, but some problems will have to be fixed before the heavy summer rains come in July and August, Sydoriak said.

The 32,727-acre (13,244-hectare) national monument has about 3,600 archaeological sites — 2,113 documented. The neighboring 224,000-acre (90,650-hectare) ranger district has 3,500 recorded sites and an additional 5,000 to 8,000 unrecorded sites.

Archaeological sites in the monument and Ranger District include some Paleo-Indian sites dating back to 9500 B.C., some archaic ones from 2,000 B.C. to A.D. 600, some Spanish sites in the late 1500s to the late 1600s and some recent Anglo ones.

Most of the Bandelier sites from about 1150 to 1450, when the ancestors of modern Pueblo Indians flourished on the Mesas and in canyons that reach like fingers from the Jemez Mountains east to the Rio Grande.

Besides Kivas and Cliffside homes in Frijoles Canyon, Bandelier has many other archaeological sites including field houses, rock art panels, stone figures and areas where stone tools were flaked.

Sydoriak said $333,500 has been spent at Bandelier for rehabilitation and researching flood and geological hazards since the fire.

Bandelier's budget request for the next fiscal year, which begins October 1, includes an estimated $1.3 million to deal with the fire's aftermath, she said.

Authorities have already approved $566,300 of that for work on park service land, Sydoriak said.

"About half will be used to stabilize the watershed on forest service lands upslope from us because that's where flood source areas are," she said. "The other half is for excavation of sites that will be lost and to assess and treat sites that we looked at last year."

While Bandelier is at the bottom of the watershed, most of the archaeological sites on the forest land sit on Mesa tops away from the main canyon arteries carrying runoff.

The Jemez Ranger District has field houses, scattered artifacts and quarry sites where obsidian was taken for tools such as arrowheads, scrapers and knives.

"We had about 100 known sites that burned over just on the forest side," said Rita Skinner, Jemez Ranger District archaeologist.

"The fire itself didn't do a whole lot of damage to the sites. It's the fire's aftereffects — erosion, things like that," Skinner said. (AP)

Kashmir Gravedigger Wants End to "Dance of Death"

SRINAGAR, India — It was a landmark of sorts; Habibullah Khan, Srinagar gravedigger, recently buried his 1,000th body.

Grave digging is supposed to give a different perspective on life, and for Habibullah, working in disputed Kashmir, it has made him increasingly depressed.

The armed conflict in Kashmir, which has left around 20,000 dead since 1989, "has changed my life", the 65-year-old says.

"Then I was hopeful. But now I feel dejected."

Habibullah works at the "Martyrs Graveyard" on the western fringe of Srinagar, the summer capital of the Himalayan state.

The graveyard, the biggest in the Kashmir Valley, was opened in January, 1990, when it was carved out of an Islamic prayer ground.

It has since become the permanent resting place of some of the most important Muslim leaders, intellectuals and human right activists who have fought and died in the name of Kashmir.

"It's a dance of death."

Habibullah has a store of graveyard memories — "some sentimental, some edifying, some unbelievably gruesome and some tragic" — but the most haunting is of a six-year-old boy whose skull had been shattered.

For three days in a row, says Habibullah, the boy's relatives appeared with new parts of his head for burial.

Habibullah, who is illiterate, says he cannot read the future — but his lack of expectation is reflected by the half-dozen fresh graves he always keeps ready.

"How many more may be buried in the months to come — Allah alone knows," he says.

"Why don't we just concentrate on being human and leave fighting to the animals?" (AFP)

هكذا من الأصل

New Zealand No Soft Touch for Political Asylum Seekers

AUCKLAND — Political refugees are not exactly pouring into New Zealand, but as far as Immigration Minister Max Bradford is concerned, 1,300 asylum seekers a year are about 1,300 too many.

Anxious at what he sees as "a consistent, alarming trend upwards" from 347 asylum seekers in 1993 to 1,310 last year, Bradford is promising to shorten the time frame for processing applications and appeals from two to three years to six months.

"We'll have more border controls so that claims can be dealt with expeditiously," he told AFP.

An intake of 50 to 60 asylum seekers would be acceptable, he said.

The minister's comments about weeding out "economic" and "non-genuine refugees" whom he believes see New Zealand as a "soft touch" have aroused the ire of Amnesty International and refugee organisations.

They say a seriously understaffed and underfunded immigration service is at the heart of the problem.

Endless waiting for appeals to be heard has driven some refugees to attempted suicide, says Amnesty's refugee co-ordinator Bill Smith.

Others are forced to sleep in doorways, on the streets or in shelters alongside alcoholics and drug addicts because of lack of support when they arrive.

Giving asylum seekers the chance for a fair hearing is a basic human right that the New Zealand government is bound to observe under the universal declaration of human rights it has signed, says Smith.

"Every case must be heard fairly. You can't do that in the middle of the night at an airport if the person doesn't speak English and has just arrived after a very long flight," he says.

"It horrifies me that we might have some kind of kangaroo court at the airport. What would happen is that some refugees would slash their wrists to prevent being sent back. This has happened already," says Smith, who has been working with refugees for over a decade.

While Bradford has yet to clarify policy changes, he sees the current system with its multiple appeals and delays as encouraging abuse.

A genuine refugee is defined under the UN charter as someone with a real fear of being persecuted, abused, jailed or tortured on grounds of their religious, political or social beliefs.

"It gets to be very subjective and difficult to prove whether someone has a reasonable fear of persecution. In the meantime they get married, have kids and get in that way," says Bradford.

In the same year that Amnesty International is drawing attention in a world-wide campaign to the plight of an estimated 15 million refugees and another 20 million internally displaced people, local refugee support groups are alarmed at the minister's proposed clamp down on asylum seekers.

New Zealand accepts 800 United Nations quota refugees every year, a figure proportionally higher than some countries, says Bradford.

Meanwhile a refugee and migrant service offering free legal advice was forced to close in Auckland two months ago due to lack of funding, while a hostel for newly arrived asylum seekers which opened recently is the only service offering temporary accommodation and legal aid.

Chris Jane, who manages the refugees as survivors centre in Auckland — a counselling service with an eight-week waiting list for refugees suffering post-traumatic stress and other disorders — said the immigration process for asylum seekers was "nightmarish."

"They feel their lives are in limbo and they live at the whim of the state."

Discounting the minister's claim that the number of asylum seekers was steadily rising, Smith said over a longer period the numbers fluctuated.

After the Persian Gulf War and the Chinese Tiananmen Square massacre, there was a sudden upsurge in asylum seekers from those countries.

Recent increases reflected a world-wide deterioration in human rights, but this did not alter the right of any asylum seeker to a fair hearing, said Smith.

"We are not undermining the genuine refugee program," said Bradford.

"What we are doing is freeing up resources which are currently being used to help people who shouldn't be here." (AFP)

UN Chief Leaves on Five-Nation Swing

UNITED NATIONS — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan leaves for The Hague today on his way to Russia, China and Japan as part of his efforts to shore up political support for UN reform.

Aides say that annan will also focus on international issues such as the conflict in Zaire during his five-nation swing, which winds up in Vienna on May 20.

In The Hague on Tuesday, Annan is to attend the inaugural session of the conference of the states parties to the landmark convention banning chemical weapons.

He is also to hold talks with Queen Beatrix before heading to China, one of the five permanent UN Security Council members along with Britain, France, Russia and the United States.

At the end of the two-week tour, Annan will have visited the capitals of all five permanent members since taking office on January 1.

During his Chinese visit from Thursday to Sunday, Annan is to meet with Vice Premier Qian Qichen and President Jiang Zemin.

He and his wife Nane will also visit the Great Wall of China and make a trip to Xian to view the historic Terra Cotta Soldiers. A visit to Shanghai is also planned.

On May 12, Annan heads for Tokyo where the government has intensified efforts to obtain a permanent seat in the 15-member Security Council. Japan currently holds a rotating non-permanent seat.

According to UN diplomats, prospects for an early solution on council expansion have dimmed since last month's non-aligned foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi.

Annan is to have an audience with Emperor Akihito before holding separate talks with Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda and Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuzuka. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto is to host a banquet in Annan's honour on May 13.

In Moscow from May 15-17, Annan is to meet with Russian leaders including President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov.

Russian officials say that Annan's visit is expected to boost the UN role in settling conflicts in the commonwealth of independent states, the loose grouping of 12 former Soviet Republics.

After making a stopover in Saint Petersburg, the UN secretary-general is to spend two days in Vienna from May 19 in talks with Austrian government and parliamentary leaders, and visiting UN headquarters.

He is also to meet with Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal, and former UN secretary-general Kurt Waldheim, a former Austrian president whose record was tarnished by accusations that he persecuted civilians while serving as a Nazi officer.

Waldheim is protesting a 10-year old U.S. decision to declare him "persona non grata" which led to his ostracization by other European leaders during his presidency, and prevented him from attending UN 50th anniversary celebrations in New York in 1995. (AFP)

UN Mission to Investigate Zaire Massacres

GENEVA — A three-member mission tasked with investigating alleged massacres in eastern Zaire, including atrocities blamed on rebel troops, has arrived in Kigali, a un spokeswoman said here Sunday.

"They arrived in Kigali (from Geneva) yesterday night," spokeswoman Therese Gastaut said.

No other details were available about the representatives' movements later Sunday, however the team was due to cross the border into eastern Zaire to start work soon after their arrival.

Two UN interlocuteurs and rebel representatives were due to hold a first meeting on Sunday in Lubumbashi, the special rapporteur on extra-judicial executions and one of the team members, Bacre Waly Ndiaye, said here Friday.

The other investigators are special human rights rapporteur for Zaire Roberto Garreton and a member of the UN working group on disappearances, Jonas Foli.

The Trio have identified a list of priority sites in eastern Zaire — mass graves that are said to contain the corpses of Rwandan refugees — that they intend to visit.

The mission also aims to investigate in the Kisangani area, were the Tutsi-dominated rebel alliance has been accused of attacking and killing hordes of Rwandan Hutu refugees inside and outside camps to the south of the town.

A resolution passed at the latest session of the UN human rights commission held in Geneva in April paved the way for the investigation, for which member governments have pledged $316,000.

Ndiaye said the success of the mission depended on securing the cooperation of rebel chief Laurent Kabila, who has waged a seven-month battle to topple President Mobutu Sese Seko from power.

The two are poised to hold landmark face-to-face talks on board a South African ship docked at a Congolese port.

Mobutu has agreed "in principal" to resign, a South African official said on board the Outeniqua Sunday.

The official declined to be named. (AFP)

Mixed With Rwandan Refugees, Burundians Have Nowhere to Go

BIARO, Zaire — Elbowing his way through the horde of Rwandan refugees crowding a UN vehicle, Jean-Pierre kept asking the same question: "Do you have any news from Rwandan? What is going to happen to us?"

The 23-year-old Burundian Hutu has ended up in the wrong place, with people bound for the wrong destination. All he shares with roughly the 80,000 Rwandan refugees in central Zaire is the nightmare of hunger, filth, death and danger in squalid camps.

"I'm not supposed to be here. i don't want to go to Rwandan. i cannot go back to Burundi," said the clean-cut former law student. "i want to continue my studies, maybe in Kisangani, but soldiers don't let me out of the camp." He refused to give his last name to protect his family still in Burundi.

Unlike the thousands of Rwandan refugees desperate to go home in a UN airlift, Jeans-Pier and an unknown number of other Burundian Hutus have nowhere to go. Ethnic strife makes it too dangerous to return to their Tutsi-ruled homeland.

"We're not encouraging repatriation to Burundi," said Paul Stromberg, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "There are several hundred Burundians in Biaro, but we still don't know what to do with them."

Since the rebels who control more than half of Zaire allowed the airlift begin, just under 4,000 Rwandans - including 1,319 on Saturday - have been flown out in the biggest refugee airlift ever attempted in Africa.

Stromberg, based in Kisangani, said a shortage of jet fuel that slowed the airlift Friday had been resolved. Tile agency aims to airlift 2,000 refugees a day.

In their push across Zaire, rebel troops, many of whom are Tutsi, have gathered Hutu refugees by the thousands and dumped them at an overcrowded transmit camp near Kisangani's main airport. Aid workers rush to feed them and send home those fit to travel.

For Jean-Pierre and others left behind in the main camps south of Kisangani, each new day means risking death from Zairian mobs who have attacked camps, rebel troops who have allegedly committed massacres and disease and hunger that has killed an estimated 60 people a day.

Even though about 30,000 refugees have returned to the Biaro camp, 41 km (25 miles) south of Kisangani, the vast majority are still unaccounted for in the jungle after attacks on the camps.

At Biaro, emaciated refugees fight for biscuits handed out by aid workers. The stench of death mixes with the stink of unwashed people and infected wounds. Mud, filth and flies coat nearly everyone.

The Rwandan refugees say they have little to lose by going home. Most of the 1.2 million Rwandan Hutus who fled in 1994 fearing of retribution for a Hutu government-orchestrated slaughter of half a million people - most of them minority Tutsis - returned home late last year.

But in Burundi, human rights groups say massacres that began in October 1993, after Tutsi paratroopers assassinated the country's first democratically elected president - a Hutu - continue today.

Both countries have a similar population distribution - 85% Hutu and 14% Tutsi.

Jean-Pierre was studying law at Bujumbura University, in Burundi's capital, when Tutsi soldiers and students stormed his dormitory almost a year ago. They killed a dozen Hutus.

"i had to leave, otherwise i would've been killed," he said in near-perfect English. he fled to Bukavu, on the Zaire-rewind border and enrolled at the Bukavu catholic university.

The college bliss he and 14 other Burundians shared there was short-lived: Zairian rebels began an insurrection against President Mobutu Sese Seko in September. As the rebels advanced through eastern Zaire, about 700,000 Rwandan hutus returned to Rwandan, but another 300,000 fled deeper into Zaire.

"When (rebel leader Laurent) Kabila attacked Bukavu, we fled out of the city where we joined up with (Rwandan) refugees," Jean-Pierre said. "We couldn't leave the group, because it wasn't safe."

Four of his fellow students died of malaria during a 700-km (430-mile) trek that ended in Biaro.



Jean-Pierre doesn't know what to do. If he stays in the camp, he risks death from disease or hunger. If he returns to Burundi, he may be killed. He doesn't want to go to Rwanda because he doesn't know it. (AFP)

The World Needs a Wake-Up Call on Food Shortage

Tehran Times Service

The world's population, now over 5.8 billion, is expected to grow to 8.6 billion by 2025. In order to ensure sustained progress towards universal food security, today's global food production will have to increase by more than 75 percent over the next 30 years, a report by Reuters said.

While a sustainable production increase of this magnitude is considered to be technically possible, it will require a formidable human, political and technological effort, it said.

The report calls among other steps for stable economic and political conditions and manageable levels of foreign debt in developing countries to help ensure countries that are able to feed their people.

FAO estimates that more than 800 million people are chronically undernourished, either because they do not produce enough food or do not have enough money to buy it.

Chilean Pedro Medrano was quoted by Reuters as saying that the threat posed to international stability from hunger and poverty-driven migration had not yet been adequately recognized.

History teaches us that when there is hunger, people go on the move, Medrano said. (But) it has not yet been understood what poverty and hunger in the Third World means to stability in the First World.

He said many developed countries now spend more on immigration controls than on development aid. He proposed a world map of hunger to help governments and organizations target aid and investment at the neediest rural areas. Medrano estimated that 100 million people were already on the move.

World leaders must tackle hunger as a threat to global stability, Medrano, Chile's permanent representative to the Rome-based FAO was quoted as saying.

He said a policy on the need to end hunger in the next century must be adopted. Also a plan of action must be adopted on how to meet the goal. The plan would commit governments to working for a world in which every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition.

[illegible] of Iran's Movement of Resistance

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Congress on Commemoration of the Commanders of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and 36,000 martyrs of Tehran Province, who fell martyrs in the course of the 1980-88 sacred defense, began work here Sunday. During the 5-day event, people renew their allegiance with the martyrs and the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei to safeguard the values of the Islamic Revolution.

The congress is a good venue for recalling the devotion and sacrifices of the best sons of Islamic Iran. It reminds us of the operations, devotion, resistance and piety of the Iranian youth. We all acknowledge that we still need their inspiration.



The congress is going to provide us with the best opportunity to renew our allegiance with the martyrs who responded to the call of the father of the Islamic Revolution, the Late Imam Khomeini. Now we should undertake to spread their message and disseminate the ideas for which they sacrificed their lives.

Martyr does not wait for death, he voluntarily chooses and challenges death. He embraces death before it overpowers him.

The congress has arranged several programs: Relying on the guidelines of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the congress pursues two objectives, namely, propagation and long term programs. Some of the long-term programs include composing poems, writing stories, producing documentary and feature films, writing or translating books, commemoration stamps, and construction of memorial buildings.

Propaganda programs will include sport-cultural festivals, TV round tables, cultural contests, and commemoration of the martyr commanders.

The congress winds up work on Thursday May 8, in Piece 24 of Behesht Zahra (martyrs graveyard) putting bunches of flowers on the graveyards of the eight-year imposed war.

People's massive participation in the congress is highly expected.

Shahid Avini's Words on Martyr

The mystery of blood dwells where the beloved bestows himself to he who deciphers the mystery.

He who experienced the relish of burning (soul and body in the way of God), finds nothing but vexation and dejection in this material being.

Life's beautiful, martyrdom more beautiful though. Healthy body's admirable, but the bird of love takes the body as a cage in the garden.

And didn't they created the necks so lean to be severed easily in the love's way?

And shouldn't the body suffer hard to brighten the soul so bright?

So, if flight is the goal, the cage better be broken.

And the migrating sparrow never frets about the ruin of its nest.

Did they create this ardent lover in the wandering globe to stay in stable of sleep and stillness?

So, if the destination cannot be traced neither under these depressing ceilings nor behind the small and dusky windows facing dead lanes, let the bird of soul slam the cage's door.

[illegible]

LONDON — Fire damaged the roof of the Royal Academy of Arts, Britain's oldest and most respected art institution, on Saturday but no works of art were affected, the fire brigade said.

Around 100 people were led to safety before firefighters arrived and paintings closest to the fire were moved before the blaze was brought under control.

The secretary of the Royal Academy, David Gordon, said 30 to 40 paintings had to be removed from one of two galleries hit by the roof-top blaze.

"The fire was brought under control fairly quickly but the walls are blackened. Fortunately, 'none of the paintings were damaged," he added.

The gallery, near Piccadilly Circus in the heart of London, was housing a temporary exhibition of the works of the German artist George Grosz.

Streets around the building were brought to a standstill as 100 firefighters battled for two hours to extinguish the fire.

Some 2,000 works were taken to the building last month for selection for the annual summer exhibition and sale of amateur British paintings, for which anyone can submit a work.

Gordon said "the summer exhibition should be able to go on as normal in another gallery."

He explained that the damage had been caused to two galleries out of about a dozen and that other galleries in the building could be used to display the works.

Only two models and two architectural drawings were damaged in the fire. *(AFP)*

Daily Food for Thought

On Anger

A man's disposition is never well known till he be crossed.

FRANCIS BACON
Advancement of Learning

'New' Pyramid Discovered in Cairo

CAIRO — A team of French archeologists has discovered a 4,300-year-old pyramid in Saqqara south of Cairo and evidence of yet another burial complex nearby, the Egyptian press reported Monday.

The archeologists found the pyramid, which dates back to about 2300 BC, in the Queens' Necropolis near the old kingdom pyramid of Pharaoh Pepi I.

The new discovery is the fifth Queen's pyramid found in the pharaonic cemetery but the name of the queen is not yet known as the south side of the tomb, which is being unearthed, has neither an entrance nor an inscription.

Nearby, the archeologists found the lintel of a door bearing the name of Queen Ankhesen-Pepi, wife of Pepi I and mother of Pepi II, whose 95-year reign was the longest in history.

The lintel, made of a block of Aswan rose granite that weighs about 15 tons, is the entrance to another burial complex belonging to the queen mother.

The archeologists said they hoped to find a temple and another pyramid there within the next year.

The Saqqara Plateau, a huge Necropolis, has nearly a hundred pyramids. *(AFP)*

[illegible]

LIMA — Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Ilosa arrived on Saturday in Lima on only the second visit to his homeland since losing a 1990 election hattle with President Alberto Fujimori.

A small group of protestors joined friends and relatives at Lima's International Airport to greet Vargas Ilosa, who lives in Spain. The author left Peru in disgust after Fujimori beat him to the presidency and has frequently criticized his rival as a "dictator."

He was returning to Peru as part of a Latin American tour to launch his new book *'Don Rigoberto's Notebooks"* and receive an honorary doctorate from Lima University. *(Reuter)*

What Is Prayer?

By Martyr Ayatollah S.M. Hosseini Beheshti

Part 1

- Praise and Adoration:

At the moment when man contemplates the perfection and infinite glory of the Creator of the cosmos, he feels completely overwhelmed by feelings of respect, modesty and lowliness. He bows before all that transcendency and grandeur out of his inner voice, touches the ground with his forehead in submission, and begins to glorify and extol the Almighty God.

Supplication:

When man finds himself in need of help from a supernatural being, he directs his attention to the Omniscient, Omnipotent and Merciful Creator of the universe, tells the Almighty God what he wants and entreats Him for help.

Worship:

The praise, adoration, supplication and entreaty are called Ebadat (worship) in the Qoranic language. The Qoran considers worship exclusive to the Almighty God and regards worshiping others except God a major sin.

"God has ordained that you must not worship anyone except Him." (17:23)

In general, the worship of the Almighty God has not been confined by Islam to any special language and form and there are no conditions or barriers in this regard. Islam only requires that worship should not be tainted with superstition, dualism, ostentation and hypocrisy.

Therefore, the Muslims can worship the Almighty God wherever and whenever and in whatever language and form they wish.

Prayer:

It is a ritual with a special form for worshiping the Almighty God and supplication which has valuable edifying aspects.

Hymn of Monotheism and Unitarianism, Chant of Virtue and

Chastity:



Prayer is the hymn of monotheism and unitarianism and the chant of virtue and chastity that protects our minds and souls against the contaminating factors existing in the everyday life.

The people are mostly busy with their routine tasks, pursuing their personal objectives and not thinking about anything else. It is quite natural and necessary that man should be engaged in everyday activities. In fact, such activities refresh and revitalize his body and soul, guide him toward new ways of life and help him to better utilize sciences and industries and devise and invent modern apparatus that will enable him to live a more comfortable life.

However, while pursuing the above objectives, the man sometimes becomes so deeply occupied with routine activities that he ignores his real self and contaminates his soul.

(To be Contd.)

Velayati Arrives in Cairo

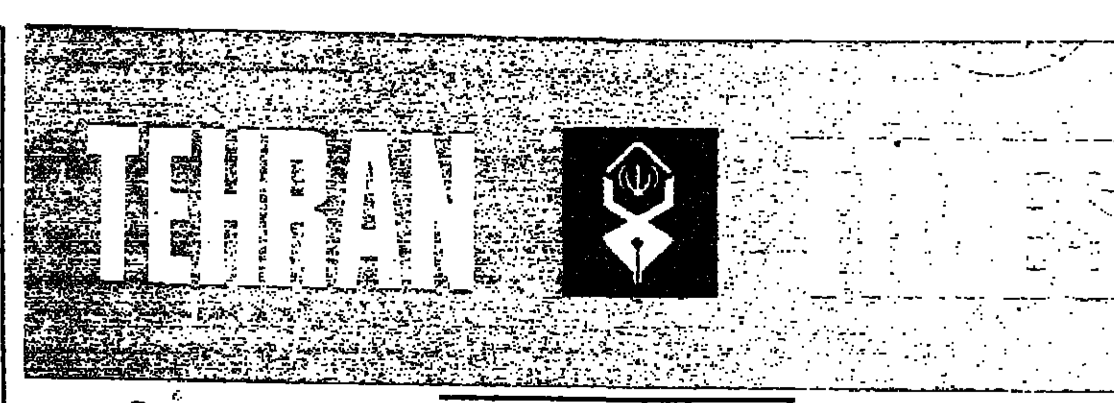
President to Inaugurate Development Projects in Isfahan

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani is to leave here for Isfahan to inaugurate Qatran Refinery and the first phase of steel development project of Mobarakeh Steel Complex today.

By putting into operation, Qatran Refinery will create some 3,000 job opportunities.

During his one-day visit to Isfahan, President Rafsanjani will also open tens of other industrial and development projects including Third World's Historical Museum, Isfahan's Central Library and Cement Factory.



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Chechnya Issues Arrest Warrant for Commander

Compiled From Dispatches

MOSCOW — Authorities in Russia's separatist region of Chechnya have issued an arrest warrant for radical commander Salman Raduyev after he claimed responsibility for two bomb attacks in southern Russia, ITAR-TASS news agency said on Monday.

"Measures are being taken to find and arrest Raduyev... I think we will soon put an end to declarations which discredit the Chechen government," TASS quoted an aide to Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov as saying.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Velayati Arrives in Cairo



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Cairo on Monday, on the first leg of his four Arab-nation tour, which will also take him to Lebanon, Yemen and Syria, IRNA reported.

Velayati is to submit President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's invitation letter to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to the 8th summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which is to be held in Tehran in December.

During his two-day stay in Egypt, Velayati is also to hold talks with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Mussa.

Velayati is also to submit President Rafsanjani's messages to the Lebanese, Yemeni and Syrian heads of state during his upcoming visits to those countries.

The Iranian minister and his companions including several members of Parliament and For-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

What Businessmen Expect From Next President

FOCUS

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — As the 7th presidential election draws nearer, *Tehran Times* conducted interviews with a group of businessmen (bazaaris) in order to get their views on the next president and their expectations from the next head of government.

It is important to stress that the issues raised are hypothetical, based as they are on economic problems encountered by the interviewees and revealing their prospects in the years ahead as the country changes leadership. Following are the excerpts:

"Currently there is no profitable balance between investment and capital return. Any sudden fluctuation of prices wipes out real income gained through investment.".

"One of the main problems of businessmen is the unstable laws and regulations. One day a law prohibits the importation of certain goods. Later, the law is reversed permitting businessmen to import the same goods."

"Sometimes the sudden increase in prices is artificial. For example, this year's inflation of 30 percent allegedly caused by the increase in prices of petrol and its finished products may be said to be artificial inflation."

"Currently the privatization of state-owned enterprises initiated by the government is encouraging, but only in so far as it does not lead to unemployment. The next president should take long-term development programs into consideration in order to reduce too much pressure on current spenders."

Zeinuddin Mohammadzadeh, a shoemaking equipment seller, says: The next president should profit from the good performance of the present government and learn lessons from its weak points. The only objective which was pursued during the term of President Hashemi Rafsanjani was development. But in my opinion, it is not right to concentrate only development and rely on foreign loans.

"The process of development should be carried out on a long-term basis. In this way more development projects can be carried out in the country."

Comments from other interviewees:

"The government should pay due attention to the genuine values of the Revolution. The government should follow the path of Imam Ali (AS). It should preserve revolutionary values."

"The next government should attach great importance to the causes and personalities behind the Revolution. The remarkable base of the Revolution are the Basijis who defended the country and who sacrificed lives to maintain the security of the country during eight years of the Iraqi- imposed war."

"There should be more stability in the economic arena as well. As a businessman, I am satisfied with my income, but I believe that there should be a more logical balance between the amount you invest in

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Saudi Prince Says Differences With Americans on Bombing

CAIRO, Egypt — Saudi Arabia differs with the United States over the investigation into last year's bombing that killed 19 U.S. servicemen, a Saudi Prince said in an interview published Monday.

Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz, the powerful governor of the Saudi capital Riyadh and a brother of King Fahd, also insisted that the kingdom maintains a policy independent of the United States.

"Talking about our connections to the Americans is not true because our decision-making is independent and nobody, including America, can have a role in that," Prince Salman told the Saudi newspaper *Asharq al-Awsat*, which is based in London.

"The proof of that is that we differ with the Americans on the Al-Khobar explosion," he said, without elaborating.

Top U.S. officials have publicly rebuked the Saudis for frustrating their efforts to find out who was responsible for the bombing of the Khobar towers apartment complex in Dhahran in June 1996.

Saudi security sources have suggested that several Shia Muslims are among the suspects.

That charge has been dismissed by Shia dissidents in Saudi Arabia who contend that the Saudi government is using the explosion as a pretext to target the disadvantaged minority, which has been agitating for better job opportunities and living conditions.

Others have stressed that majority Sunni Muslims were also among the suspects. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, faces home-grown opposition among Sunni activists opposed to its ties with the West and critical of widespread corruption.

(AP)

Turk Islamist MP Says Not Pursuing Education Plan

ANKARA — A deputy from the Islamist wing of Turkey's coalition said on Monday his party would not go along with military demands on secularist education by preparing a draft law on state schooling.

"It is not possible for us to prepare a draft law on this subject at the moment," Welfare Party MP Salih Kapusuz told a news conference when asked about army-led calls for eight-year, uninterrupted state education.

Islamists fear such an education program, part of an anti-Islamist crackdown led by the Armed Forces, could lead to the partial closure of religious, Imam Hatip schools.

Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's Islam-based Welfare Party, which counts many graduates of Imam Hatip schools among its members, has stalled on going ahead with the education reform.

At a meeting on Sunday, around 1,500 supporters of Istanbul's religious secondary schools vowed to fight their closure.

The education plan was among measures aimed at curbing Islamist activism which were presented by the military-dominated National Security Council at the end of February.

Under existing laws, compulsory education lasts five years and school children can only then attend Imam Hatip schools at age 11.

The proposed change would mean pupils would be barred from entering the schools for another three years, which, the army says, will curtail the Islamists' influence over pupils.

Some of Erbakan's aides have urged him to break the coalition and call for an early general election rather than assent to the military's education proposal.

Two ministers from the conservative government wing resigned last month in frustration at the efforts by Welfare to resist the army's demands. (Reuter)

Jordan: American Support for Israel Hurting Peace Process

DOHA, Qatar — U.S. support for Israel has hampered the peace process, Jordan's prime minister was quoted as saying Monday.

"We ask Washington to stop its support of Tel Aviv so that it can change its policies, otherwise the peace process will be delayed," Prime Minister Abdul-Salam Majali said at a news conference, which was carried by the official Qatar news agency.

Majali arrived here Saturday for talks on the peace process and on increasing trade between Jordan and Qatar. The two are among the few Arab countries that have set up ties with the Zionist state.

Jordan, which signed a treaty with Israel in 1994, has tried to restart the peace process, which faltered after Israel broke ground for a housing project for Jews in part of Bait-ul-Moqaddas captured from Arabs in 1967 and claimed by Palestinians as a future capital.

Majali was accompanied by a high-level delegation including the country's ministers of labor and energy and mineral resources.

Part of the talks looked at Jordan's desire to increase employment opportunities for its nationals in Qatar, which is rich in oil and gas, and to import Qatari gas.

The two sides also discussed reconciling Arab countries still divided by the 1991 Persian Gulf war, a point reiterated in talks between Majali and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani.

"We should get over the effects of the Persian Gulf war and look toward the future," Majali was quoted as saying.

(AP)

Egypt Calls On U.S. to Take Balanced Approach to Mideast Peace

CAIRO — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa called on the United States on Monday to adopt a "balanced approach" to help revive stalled Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations.

"There is a general feeling that the situation is dangerous," Mussa told a press conference after talks here between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

"This was the nature of the discussion (between Mubarak and Arafat)," he added.

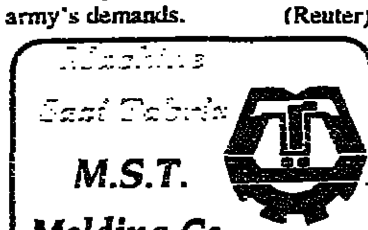
The Egyptian foreign minister stressed that any solution must deal with Israel's settlement policy particularly in Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

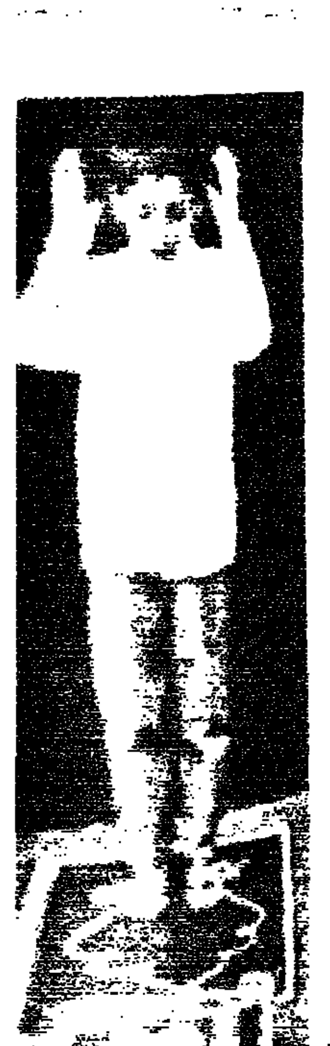
Mussa stressed that "the United States, in order to lead to a balanced peace, has to have a balanced approach" to the problems facing the region.

"As sponsor of the peace process the United States has a responsibility to fulfill in brokering a just and global peace and to try to get the two parties to implement the elements of their commitments," he said. "In particular, Israel because of the special relationship between the U.S. and Israel."

Mussa was also asked to comment on the views of Syrian Presi-

(Contd on Pg. 14)





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In the Name of God

But the Apostle and those who believe with him strive hard with their property and their persons; and these it is who shall have the good things and these it is who shall be successful.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:88)

OPINION

Iran, China, Russia Cooperation, Prelude to Multilateral Cooperation in Asia

President Akbar Hashemi Rafsnajani in his meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Li Lanqing called for Iran-China-Russia trilateral cooperation to pave the way for broader regional cooperation.

Iran is the most powerful country of the Persian Gulf region, while Russia and China are heavy weights in international arena.

Beijing and Moscow have realized that in the emerging world order they must cooperate to thwart bullying of the United States.

During the Cold War, the United States spared no effort to increase the gap between Beijing and Moscow and at the same time it tried to play one against another.

Although after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia, the successor of the former Soviet Union, has reached a rapprochement with the U.S., Washington has resorted to every possible means to isolate Russia.

Likewise in its relations with Beijing, the White House has always resorted to the politicized issue of human rights, chemical weapons and arms transfer, whereas Washington is itself the chief exporter of arms and chief violator of human rights because it is the main sponsor of international terrorism.

Asia possesses a huge reservoir of minerals and raw materials and a pool of manpower. The Asian economies are in real terms complementary, but serious problems which prevailed in the West in the 19th century have become the predominant issues in Asia today, hindering a meaningful cooperation among the Asian countries.

We, in Asia, have not yet learnt that all of us are citizens of the Third World. We have not realized that the country's interests should be sacrificed for region's interests. We have not realized that ethnic, religious and national values should not prevent us from forging regional alliances. We have not realized that our division is only in the West's interests.

It is time Asia, the cradle of the world's oldest civilizations, emerged as a giant pole in the arena of the world. Key countries like Iran, China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia should begin to revive Asia to pave the way for other countries to climb on the bandwagon.

Oman, Iran to Cooperate in Transportation

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - In a meeting in Muscat on Saturday between the Iranian Ambassador to Oman, Siavash Zargar-Yaqubi and the Omani Minister of Communications, Salim bin Abdullah al-Ghazali the promotion of cooperation in transportation between Iran and the Persian Gulf states was reviewed.

In their talks the two sides also discussed the shipping facilities in the Strait of Hormouz between Iran and Oman, IRNA reported.

The Omani minister voiced his country's willingness for expanding its cooperation in that area with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It was stipulated that at the meeting of the working committee to design plans within the framework of joint commission for future actions at the forthcoming meetings to be held in the two countries.

Zarif Named as Chairman of Asia-Africa Consultative Legal Commission

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Asia-Africa Consultative Legal Commission named Javad Zarif, deputy foreign minister of Iran in legal and international affairs, as its rotatory chairman on Sunday.

The commission opened its thirty-sixth session in Tehran on Saturday.

Among other things on its agenda, the five-day conference will look into different issues such as reports of activities by the commission of international law, the international maritime law, international rivers, environmental issues and different aspects of the international court of justice functions.

At present, 44 Asian and African countries are members of the commission.

Several ministers from member states as well as other high ranking officials including the UN secretary general's deputy in legal affairs have taken part in the conference.

President Inaugurates Congress on Commemorating Martyrs of Tehran Province


Photo: Mojtaba Tekin

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here Sunday evening inaugurated the Commemoration Congress of the Martyred Commanders of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) and 36,000 Martyrs of Tehran Province.

In his inaugural address, he praised the devotion of the martyrs during the 1980-88 Iraqi imposed war and stressed that the whole country, the nation and the martyrs' fellow combatants will never forget the acts of bravery by the martyrs.

He further reiterated that through the martyrdom-seeking morality of the war martyrs, Islamic Iran emerged victorious in confrontation with the enemies who were armed-to-teeth and nullified the propaganda campaign launched by the arrogant powers.

Considering the devotion of the war martyrs, the UN finally had to admit that the Iraqi regime was the aggressor, the president stressed.

Due to presence of the fellow combatants of those martyrs who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the late Imam Khomeini and who are now supporting the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Iranian nation is able to reconstruct the country and neutralize the enemies' conspiracy, he concluded.

Also addressing the ceremony, the IRGC Commander, Brigadier General Mohsen Rezaei said that as long as the culture of martyrdom exists, no political, economic or cultural obstacle would hinder the movement of the people.

He said that the five-day congress includes several cultural and sports events.

Pourshasb Appointed Acting Ground Forces Commander

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Brigadier General Abdol Ali Pourshasb was appointed acting ground forces commander during ceremonies attended by the chief of the Armed Forces, Major General Ali Shahbazi and the three forces commanders.



Brigadier General Ahmad, formerly serving as ground forces; and Brigadier General Karim Ebadat, former acting ground forces commander were assigned as advisors to the Chief of Staff of

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Names of Approved Presidential Candidates to Be Released Thursday

TEHRAN — Names of approved presidential candidates for 23rd May elections are to be released for public knowledge this Thursday.

They are those, from a total of 238, whose qualification for candidacy has been approved by the Guardians Council of Iran. In the group, there are also eight women, one minus the original number due to her voluntary withdrawal.

Candidates will have 12 days for presidential campaigning starting on Saturday May 10.

(IRNA)

Death Toll Rises to 3 in Birjand Floods

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Three persons died and 1040 houses were destroyed in villages of the city of Birjand, as a result of the heavy rainfalls and floods last week.

Head of the Natural Disasters Headquarters of the city, Ardeshir Maleki, said here Monday that 200 wells were destroyed and 1790 livestockes were killed.

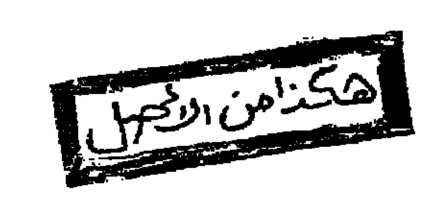
Furthermore some 2,500 hectares of agricultural land and orchards, more than three km of water canals, 41 bridges, 3300 km of rural road, 24 schools, 15 health centers, mosques and public baths have also been destroyed, he added.

15 Percent of Schools Built by Philanthropists

SHAHR-E KORD, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Prov. — A deputy of the Ministry of Education said here Monday that 15 percent of the new schools in the country are constructed by philanthropists.

Emadeddin Qazavi added that from the beginning of the First Five-Year Development Plan (1990-94) till the present, 135,000 new classes have been constructed.

The per capita educational space has increased from 97 Sq. meters to 127 Sq. meters during this period, he added.



ATAOLLAH MOHAJERANI: No Coalition Formed Between MRM and Kargozaran

"Opinion surveys indicate that none of the presidential candidates can manage to obtain 50 percent of the votes in the elections," said Presidential Deputy for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Ataollah Mohajerani.

Mohajerani, a leading member of the Kargozaran-e-Sazandegi, predicted that candidates in the seventh presidential elections will face tight competition that will necessitate a run-off.

On voter support for the candidate of their choice, Mohajerani said:

"Mr. Khatami can count on government employees and their families, craftsmen, artisans, researchers, workers and students (but) this does not mean that other candidates have no foothold in these segments of the community."

Elaborating on the reason why Khatami is being backed by the Kargozaran-e-Sazandegi, Mohajerani said:

"Mr. Khatami filed his individual application, and despite the fact that he is a member of the Majma-e Rouhaniyoon Mobarez (MRM), the Kargozaran has backed him up on account of his qualifications and possibility of winning."

On a possible coalition, Mohajerani stressed that Kargozaran has not sat to discuss the subject with the MRM, nor has it entered into a discussion with Majma-e Rohaniyoon Mobarez regarding economic, social and cultural policies to reach an agreement.

"Kargozaran has only a common nominee with this wing (MRM). It cannot be said to be a coalition," Mohajerani said.

Regarding slogans associated with Kargozaran in the seventh presidential elections, the president's deputy for legal and parliamentary affairs added that in the course of the forthcoming presidential elections the formula "Better Future for Islamic Iran" has been added to the three former catchphrases of Kargozaran—Islamic dignity, continued construction and prosperity for Iran.

He stressed that the people's choice in the first round of the elections will be decisive and that any candidate who obtains the highest number of votes will, in fact, be the most likely successor to President Rafsanjani.

Worth noting is that based on the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a candidate to be declared winner in a presidential election must obtain a majority of the votes (50 percent+1) in the initial voting. If an absolute majority is not obtained, a run-off will be called to select between the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes in the first round and the one who placed second. Whoever has the higher number of votes (relative majority) is considered elected.

Kinkel Says Up to Iran to End Envoy Row

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel on Monday criticized Iran for a diplomatic row over the country's refusal to accept the return of the German and Danish envoys to Tehran, Reuter reported.

"It is not us but Iran who has caused this situation and it is up to Iran to put it back into order," a Foreign Ministry spokesman quoted Kinkel as saying.

Kinkel said the European Union would not allow anybody to divide it in its attitude towards Iran and said the EU's ambassadors would not return to Tehran for the time being.

Iran said last Wednesday neither the German nor the Danish ambassador was welcome back in the country after the EU agreed to send its envoys back.

It is worth note that it was Germany not Iran who initiated the row by jumping up the Zionist anti-Iran bandwagon and that it is Germany who should put the situation back into order.

Pakistani MP For Mutual Parliamentary Ties

TEHRAN — Speaker of the Assembly of Frontier Province of Pakistan Haji Adil said here on Monday that closer relations between Iranian and Pakistani parliaments would be highly effective in restoration of peace and stability in the region.

Adil, who was speaking to a member of the Presiding Board of the Majlis Reza Akrami, underlined consolidation of relations between the parliaments of the two countries.

Akrami for his part underlined the need for unity among regional states in order to ensure calm and peace in the region. (IRNA)

Civil Servants Are Underpaid

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Hashemi Rafsanjani, concurrent chief of the High Council for Administration said civil servants are among the most hardworking and patient servants of society but are not given the pay they deserve.

The president's remarks were part of a speech he delivered at the opening ceremony of an exhibit displaying administrative improvements which opened yesterday.

Rafsanjani expressed satisfaction with the efforts of all those actively engaged in the orderly administration of the country's affairs, saying "equity" should be observed with regard to the efforts of civil servants in this regard.

He also underscored the necessity of streamlining the administrative sector of government and called on all civil servants to be serious in their work so as not to waste the time of clients.

The president lauded the exhibit featuring administrative improvements as being indicative of the incessant and unsparing efforts of the government to achieve efficient organization, implementation of methods, and mobilization of human forces to maximize results.

Rafsanjani called on all those who have innovative ideas pertaining to administration matters to come and visit the exhibition and air their views and suggestions.

Ayatollah Yazdi: Acquainting the Society With the Culture of Martyrdom, a Must



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Judiciary Chief, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, said that inculcating in society an appreciation for martyrdom is a must.

The ayatollah's remarks were made yesterday in his address to the first congress held on Monday for three days to honor martyred commanders.

Ayatollah Yazdi said the fallen martyrs joined the battlefront in order to protect God's cause and upon the behest of the Vali-e Amr of the time (Supreme Muslim Jurisprudent).

The chief of judiciary said obeying the Vali-e Amr is tantamount to obeying God and added that obedience to the Vali-e Amr of the time brings salvation and disobedience deviation.

Yazdi said that the Islamic system is proud of the fact that its military commanders led their forces in the front lines of action rather than sitting in command rooms and giving orders.

Professor Samiee: Iran's Progress in Medical Sciences Excellent

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Secretary of the World Federation of Neurology, Professor Majid Samiee, here Monday praised Iran for its progress in the field of medical research and said that if the physicians are provided with the required equipment, neurology will significantly grow in Iran.

Speaking on the sidelines of the first international gathering of Iranian experts, scientists and thinkers, Samiee stressed that establishment of scientific links with scientific and medical centers of the world will help Iran to further upgrade medical services in the country.

He added that if the aims of the seminar are materialized, the holding of such gatherings will be a positive stride toward scientific and technical development of the country.

Links between domestic and foreign medical centers will be the best channel for advancement of the country and that one should take advantage of opportunities to establish suitable scientific links.

He said for his part, taking advantage of the facilities at his disposal, he is ready to do his best for the Islamic country.

Iran's Friendship Group off to Kuwait

TEHRAN — An Iranian Parliamentary Friendship Group left here for Kuwait Monday on a four-day official visit.

The delegation is headed by the chairman of Irano-Kuwait Friendship Group, Seyed Mahmoud Alavi, and is to meet with some Kuwaiti officials and members of parliament during its stay in Kuwait. (IRNA)

President Rabbani to Attend ECO Summit

ALMATY — President Burhanudin Rabbani will represent his country at a summit of the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) on May 13 and 14 in Turkmenistan, the country's embassy there said.

"President Rabbani will come accompanied by advisers, as he did last year in Ashkabad for the previous ECO summit," an Afghan diplomat told AFP by telephone.

Rabbani and his government fled Kabul last September as forces of the Taleban movement moved and took control.

He now divides his time between Mazar-i-Sharif, in the north of the country, and Taluqan, in the east.

The diplomat said that "The Taleban do not represent real state power and will not be invited to Ashkabad." (AFP)

President: Reliance on Qoran, Main Cause of Muslims' Victories

TEHRAN — Iran's President Hojatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said in a message to national college students competitions on the reciting of the Qoran and Qoranic scholarship Sunday that every triumph of Muslims was due to their reliance on the Holy Qoran.

Present Rafsanjani said in his message that the Holy Qoran is the philosophical foundation for every area of Islamic studies and added that historically, every Muslim generation that had relied heavily on the Holy Qoran and on the store of knowledge of the household of prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a criteria for its material progress and its spiritual uplifting had developed "the most solid and the most meaningful" community of humans to the world society.

He said he was happy to witness the ever growing popularity of the Qoranic studies with college students and of the steadily increasing number of students participating in those competitions, and expressed hope that such events would help promote the Qoranic culture in the Islamic Iran.

Iranian Handicrafts on Display at Bordeaux Exhibition

TEHRAN — Iranian handicrafts have been put on display in the 72nd Bordeaux International Exhibition in France, it was announced here on Monday.

Some 50 countries are displaying their products in the 38,000 sq.m fair with Iranian manufacturers and trading companies putting on show items such as carpets, mats, glass wares and chandeliers at the fair.

The ten-day exhibition opened on May 3 and will run until May 12.

Conference of Asian Union for Barter Trade Opens



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The Twenty-Sixth Annual Conference of the Board of Directors of the Asian Union for Barter Trade was convened here on Monday.

In his inaugural speech, Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Mohsen Nourbakhsh said that the main duty of the two-day conference was to enforce a payment system designed by the member states to settle their accounts every two months, IRNA reported.

He added that facilitation of payment procedures and trade exchanges within the Asian Union for Barter Trade has increased the amount of trade among the member states from $25 million in 1975 to $three billion in 1996.

Nourbakhsh noted that the method can serve as a model for facilitation of payments among other countries and can lead to an expanded trade among regional countries.

The CBI governor predicted that the next conference of the union will be held in Pakistan.

The Board of Directors of the Asian Union for Barter Trade is composed of the central bank governors of Bangladesh, India, Iran, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Rls.90bn for Urban Development Projects in Mazandaran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Some Rls.90 billion has been allocated to implementation of urban development projects in Mazandaran, this year, Ghavam Nozari, Deputy Governor of the Mazandaran Province of Iran said on Monday.

According to the official the credit has been increased by 67 percent compared to that of last year, IRNA reported.

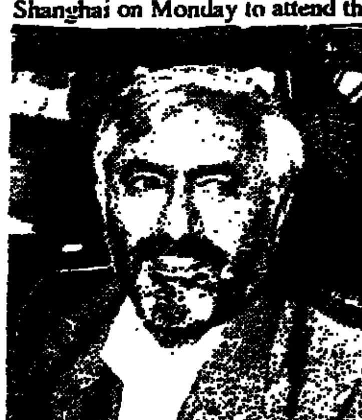
Nozari added that the sum will be spent on improving roads and streets, landscaping of the city, water management projects and construction of dykes in costal towns.

Mazandaran Province has 20 cities, 50 towns and 3,500 villages.

PTT Minister in China

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telephone, Mohammad Gharazi arrived in Shanghai on Monday to attend the



meeting of Asia-Pacific Telecommunications.

Representatives from 35 countries will participate in the three-day meeting which is to open on Wednesday.

Promotion of telecommunication cooperation between countries of Asia-Pacific region will be discussed in the meeting, IRNA reported.

Alviri Arrives in China

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Secretary of Iran's High Council of Free Trade and Industrial Zones, Morteza Alviri, arrived in Shanghai on Monday to attend the joint meeting of heads of Chinese and Iranian free trade and industrial zones.

Head of the free trade zone of 'Podong' of China, Zhao Chi Zen, speaking to IRNA correspondent in Beijing said yesterday that the visit of the Iranian delegation will help expansion of cooperation between the two countries' free trade and industrial zones.

He also called for exchange of experiences and more contacts between officials of free trade zones of Iran and China.

China, Russia Ready to Contribute to Oil, Gas Projects in Iran

Tehran Times Service

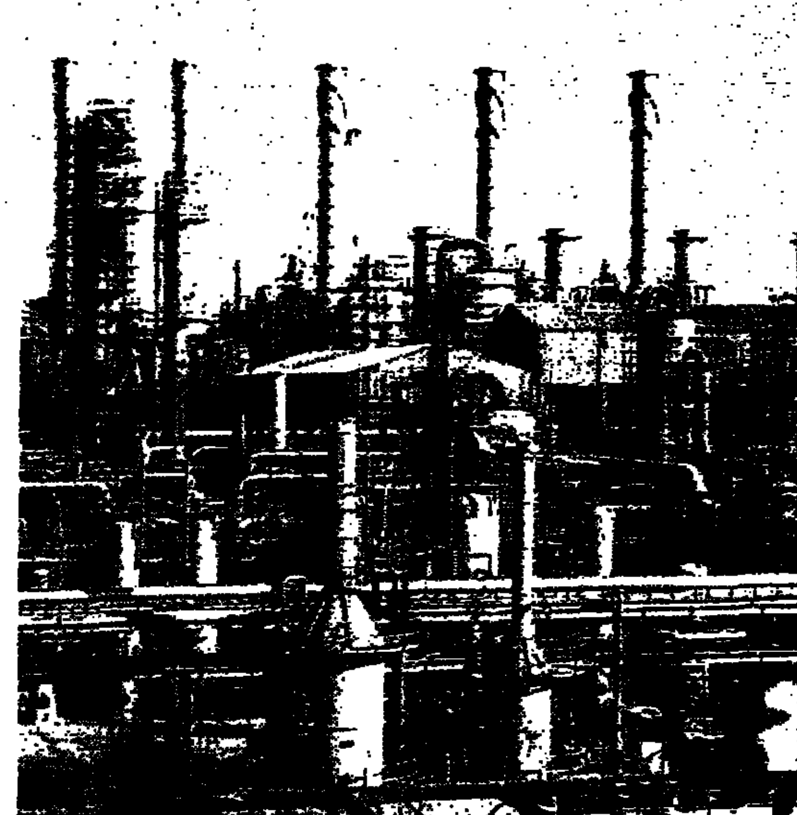
TEHRAN - China and Russia are ready to contribute to oil and gass projects in Iran, an official with National Iranian Oil Company Esmaeil Jalilian said on Monday.

He described as satisfactory the trend of negotiations with foreign countries participating in international tenders for oil and gas projects based on buy-back scheme, IRNA reported.

Pointing to fate of Hengam gas-field shared by Iran and Oman, Jalilian said "we have already held some negotiations with the Omani Oil Ministry on implementation of joint projects in the oil field."

"We are now preparing to call an international tender for development of the oil field and so far some European and Australian companies have voiced readiness to take part in the tender," he said.

Iran possesses 80 percent of the field while Oman owns 20 percent, he said, adding that the reserves of the field include 523 billion cubic meters of liquefied gas and 120 millon barrels of liquefield oil.



Once developed, the production of the field will be between 200 to 250 million cubic meters of gas per day and 20,000 to 25,000 barrels of liquefied oil and gas, he added.

Iran's Cargo Transportation Capacity to Reach 2bn Tons

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's cargo transportation capacity is expected to rise to two billion tons annually by 2021 once the comprehensive 'Iran in the year 1400' project is implemented.

Roads and Transportation Minister Akbar Torkan said that under the project 14,000 km of railroads would be laid and 6,000 km of roads together with 8,000 km of expressways would be built, IRNA reported.



Torkan said that 30 big terminals and 23 modern airports are being built which are schedueld to become operational by the end of the Second Five-Year Economic Development Plan (1995-1999).

Iran-China Sign 60-Plus Letters of Understanding

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran and China signed more than 60 letters of understanding, it was said at the end of the last round of talks between Deputy President of Iran for Executive Affairs Mohammad Hashemi and visiting Deputy Prime Minister of China Li Lanqing.

The letters of understanding cover a variety of areas in the fields of air and surface transportation, railway, subway, energy and hyrdo-electric power plants and oil, IRNA reported.

According to a letter of understanding signed by Iran and China Iran's oil is to be refined at China's refineries, China hoping to buy twice as much Iranian oil for the next year as it did this year.

The two countries have also undertaken to make joint investments for developing solar systems as novel energy sources.

According to the letters of (Contd on Pg.14)

Tehran-Caracas Cooperation Discussed

Tehran Times Service

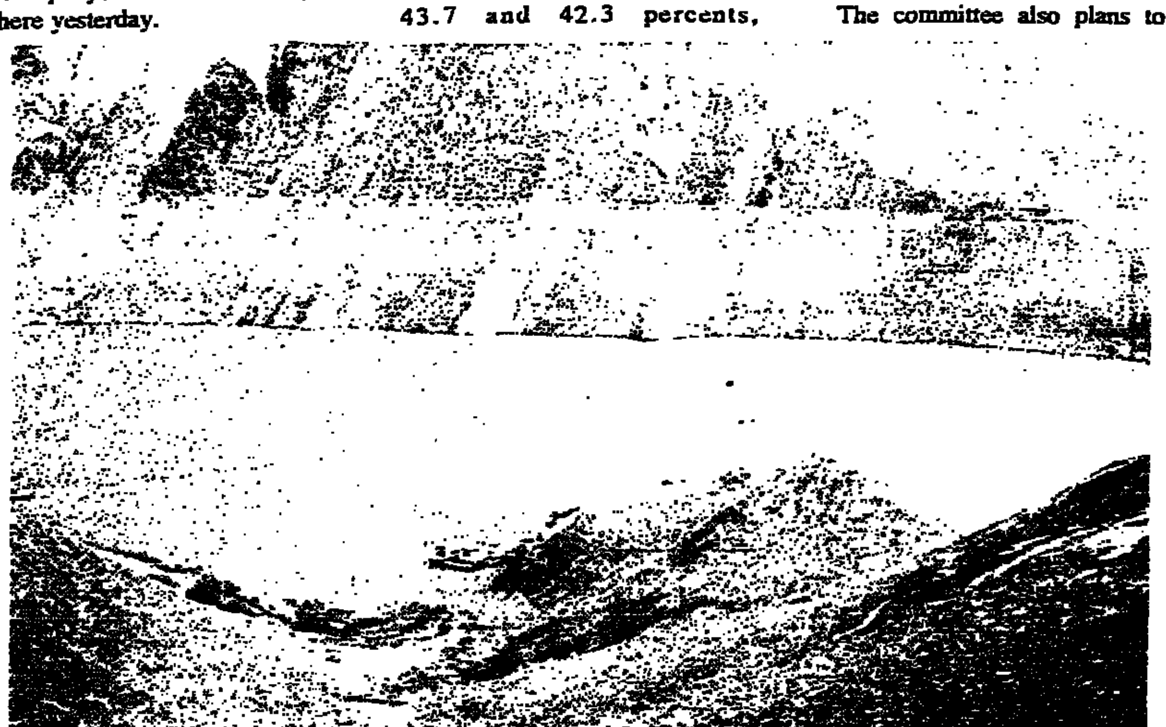
TEHRAN - Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh and Venezuelan Minister of Energy and Mines Erwin Jose Arrieta Valeran here on Monday exchanged views on Iran's use of Venezuelan experiences for extraction of heavy crude oil from new Iranian oil-fields.

The two ministers reviewed mutual cooperation in such fields as exchange of crude oil for sale in the markets close to either country and petrochemical industry, IRNA reported.

Alleviating Water Crisis the Responsibility of All

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — "People should contribute (what they can) to overcome water shortages in Tehran," Managing Director of the Sewage and Water Treatment Company, Mohsen Nariman, said here yesterday.



Speaking at a press conference, Nariman said that due to a shortage of rainfall and an increase in people's water consumption in Tehran the city is facing a water crisis.

He further said that the water deposits behind Latyan, Lar, and Karaj dams have declined and the flow of water basins in Karaj, Lar and Latyan have declined by 39.5, 43.7 and 42.3 percents, respectively, compared with those of the previous year.

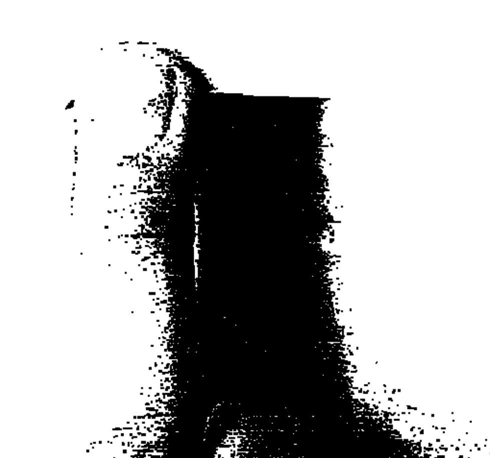
According to Nariman, a water crisis committee has been set up in Tehran to take necessary measures in this regard. These measures include digging 70 wells, dismantling of illegal water branches and the setting up of a water pumping system to operate in Lar Dam.

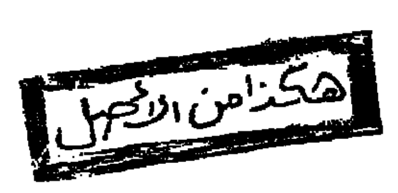
The committee also plans to wage informational measures to make people aware of the need to decrease water consumption and to encourage its saving.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

The following table shows the foreign exchange rates in rials as released by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Monday, May 5, 1997.

COUNTRY	UNIT	Floating Rates BUY	Floating Rates SELL	Export Rates BUY	Export Rates SELL
Australia	dollar	1,369	1,377	2,350	2,362
Austria	schilling	144	145	247	248
Belgium	(100) francs	4,916	4,944	8,440	8,482
Canada	dollar	1,263	1,271	2,169	2,180
Denmark	krone	266	268	458	460
France	franc	300	302	516	519
Germany	mark	1,013	1,018	1,739	1,747
Holland	guilder	901	906	1,547	1,555
Italy	(100) liras	102	103	176	177
Japan	(100) yen	1,379	1,387	2,368	2,380
Sweden	krone	223	225	384	386
UAE	dirham	476	479	818	820
UK	pound	2,816	2,832	4,834	4,858
U.S.	dollar	1,750	1,755	3,000	3,015





SPORTS SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

FOOTBALL

Parma Close in on Juventus

MILAN, Italy: Parma threw open the Italian title race on Sunday, when they came back to beat Atalanta 2-1 while leaders Juventus were held 0-0 by Sampdoria. Parma closed the gap on the European champions from six to just four points — with five matches still to play, including the Parma v. Juventus showdown on May 25. Gianluigi Lentini, on loan from AC Milan, gave Atalanta a 37th minute lead, but Parma's on-form Argentine striker Hernan Crespo nodded in an equalizer after five minutes of first-half injury time. Enrico Chiesa got the winner in the 61st minute, reopening a race which had looked over and done with. Roy Hodgson's Inter Milan stay third after losing 1-0 to Vicenza Saturday night.

Celtic Win Delays Rangers' Party

GLASGOW, Scotland: Rangers were made to wait at least another 24 hours before they could celebrate a record-equaling ninth successive Scottish premier division title after rivals Celtic beat Hibs 3-1 on Sunday. Celtic kept alive their remote hopes of denying old firm rivals Rangers the championship thanks to two goals from Portuguese star Jorge Cadete and another from Paolo di Canio. Rangers now need to take a point from their game against Motherwell on Monday to take the title.

New Champions Held by Caen

PARIS: Monaco, who had already clinched the French league title 24 hours earlier when rivals Paris St. Germain were held to a 2-2 draw by visiting Bordeaux, paid the price for lack of concentration in their home Sunday clash against Caen and ended all square at 2-2. Conaco twice took the lead — first through Nigerian frontrunner Victor Ikpeba eight minutes into the second half and then through late substitute Thierry Henry sixteen minutes from time. But on both occasions Caen struck back immediately — Frederic Nee making it 1-1 in the 58th minute and Stephane Roche scoring the visitor's second goal in the 74th. The results left Monaco on 73 points from 36 matches and Paris St. Germain on 64. In Sunday's other French first division match, Monaco's neighbors Cannes forced a 2-2 draw with Strasbourg.

Suker Lifts Real Nine Points Clear

MADRID: Real Madrid moved closer to their 27th Spanish league title on Sunday as two goals from Davor Suker and another from Roberto Carlos saw off Sporting Gijon 3-1 at the Bernabeu. They are now nine points clear of rivals Barcelona. Champions-elect Real, set to lose coach Fabio Capello at the end of the season, could not afford to make any mistakes in advance of next weekend's trip to Barcelona's Camp Nou with their Catalan rivals still clinging on in the championship race. Bobby Robson's men face Extremadura away on Monday while third-placed Betis missed a great chance when they managed only a 0-0 draw at home against midtable Compostela. On Saturday, Deportivo la Coruna, had gone level on points with both Betis and Barcelona when they hammered relegation-threatened Sevilla 3-0.

Bayern Held in Six-Goal Thriller

BONN: Bayern Munich extended their lead on top of the Bundesliga to three points Sunday, but only after rescuing a point in the dying minutes in a six-goal thriller against city rivals Munich 1860. Carsten Jancker, signed last summer from Rapid Vienna, saved Bayern with his first goal of the season two minutes from time as the title favorites came back from two down, despite having Christian Ziege and veteran Lothar Matthaeus dismissed for fouls in the final 20 minutes. The result leaves Werner Lorant's Munich 1860 in the frame to grab a UEFA Cup place, four points behind fifth-placed Bochum, but more significantly pushes Bayern yet closer to their 14th title. Second-placed Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday let slip a two-goal lead and had to settle for a 2-2 draw at Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Battling Bradford Beat the Drop

LONDON: Two goals from Nigel Pepper and one from Tommy Wright ensured Bradford's survival in England's first division and condemned Grimsby to relegation on Sunday. Bradford scored a crucial 3-0 win over Queens Park Rangers in the final league match of the season.

Heat, Hawks Advance to Second Round, Jazz Defeats Lakers

MIAMI — The Miami Heat withstood one last comeback by the Orlando Magic and held on for a 91-83 victory Sunday in the deciding fifth game of their first-round playoff series.

Orlando scored 10 consecutive points midway through the fourth quarter and reduced a 17-point deficit to three, but Tim Hardaway shook off a shooting slump to hit two baskets — an off-balance 20-footer (6-meter) and a 3-pointer from 24 feet (7 meters) — in the final 43 seconds to clinch the victory.

The Heat survived Penny Hardaway's 33-point effort to win a playoff series for the first time in their nine-year history.

Miami, the Atlantic division champion, advanced to the second round against coach Pat Riley's former team, the New York Knicks. The opening game in the best-of-7 series will be Wednesday at Miami Arena.

Hawks 84, Pistons 79

In Atlanta, Dikembe Mutombo showed why he's the NBA defensive player of the year, making two key defensive plays late in the fourth quarter of Atlanta's clinching victory.

The Hawks, who trailed 2-1 in the best-of-5 series, won the final two games to earn a meeting with the defending NBA champion Chicago Bulls in the second round. Game 1 is Tuesday night at the united center.

With the score tied at 77, Grant Hill drove the baseline for a dunk, but the shot was deflected away by Mutombo. Christian Laettner hit a 17-footer (5-meter) as the 24-second clock expired to put the Hawks ahead to stay, 79-77 with 1:14 remaining.

Hill then drove around Mutombo and headed to the hoop trying to pull the Pistons even, but Atlanta's 7-foot-2 (2.18-meter) center caught Hill from behind and got a hand on the shot.

Steve Smith then made a 3-pointer from deep in the left corner as he was falling out of bounds with 41.7 seconds to go.

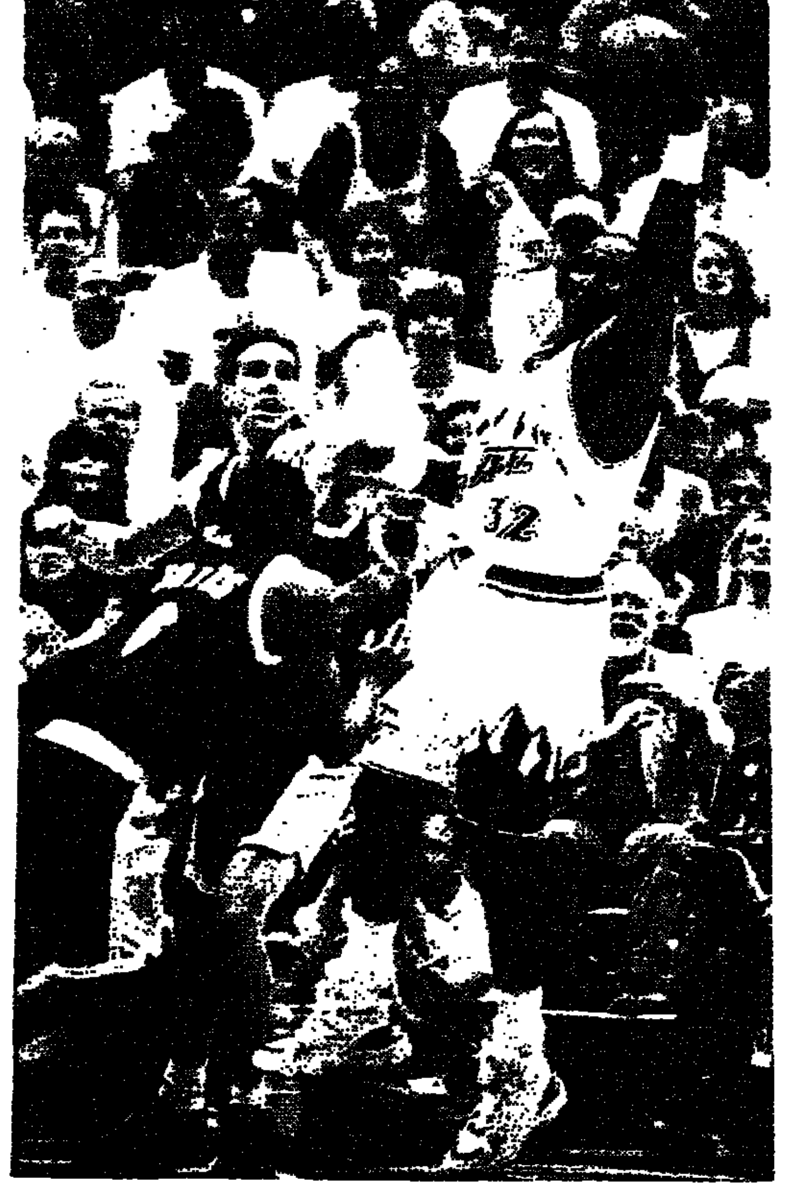
Jazz 93, Lakers 77

In Salt Lake City, Karl Malone had 23 points and 13 rebounds to lead Utah past Los Angeles in the opener of their second-round series.

Malone, 9-of-21 from the floor, also had two blocked shots and a pair of steals for the Jazz, who will try for a 2-0 lead in the best-of-7 series Tuesday night.

Shaquille O'Neal, playing little more than 40 hours after Los Angeles rallied to beat Portland in the first round, shot just 6-of-16 for 17 points — his lowest production of the playoffs.

Nick van Exel had 23 points to lead the Lakers, who were outshot 45.8 percent to 34.2 percent. Los Angeles had only nine field goals in the second half and 27 for the game. (AP)



SALT LAKE CITY, UT, United States (May 3): Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz (R) reaches for the ball as Travis Knight (rear) and Eddie Jones of the Los Angeles Lakers (L) look on during play in the first game of the NBA Western Conference semi-finals in Salt Lake City, Utah. Malone scored 23 points as the Jazz won 93-77. (AFP PHOTO)

10th Stage of Azarbaijan Cycling Competition Starts

URUMIEH, W. Azarbaijan Prov. — The 10th stage of the cycling competition of Azarbaijan Tour started here Monday morning from Urumieh to Mahabad, in this northwestern province.

Pedalists from Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Syria, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan Republic, Malaysia and five teams from Iran are competing along the 115 km distance between Urumieh and Mahabad.

In team classification, so far Kazakhstan with 97:18 hours stands first followed by Ukraine and Fajr Team of Tabriz. (IRNA)

Hong Kong Cyclist, South Korean Team Win Tour of Philippines

MANILA, The Philippines — Hong Kong cyclist Wong Kam Po won the individual race by more than a minute Sunday and South Korea took the team title in the first international edition of the Tour of the Philippines.

The 24-year-old Wong needed 62 hours, 6 minutes, 28 seconds for the 2,465-kilometer (1,540.6-mile) race across the Philippine archipelago, finishing at Manila's Rizal Park.

Victor Espiritu placed second in of 62:07:47, and Filipino compatriot Placido Valdez was third in 62:10:11.

"This is a very important win for me," said Wong, an Olympic veteran, who received 500,000 pesos ($19,230) and a new car. He won an additional prize for winning one of the tour's 16 laps.

Wong was one of the tour's favorites, having won the Tour of Taiwan in the past and finishing high in other Asian bicycle races.

Espiritu had been leading but fell Saturday on a sharp bend during a downpour in Northern Nueva Ecija Province, losing a 10-second edge over Wong.

South Korean Hwang Ji-Sung won the final 75-kilometer (46-mile) lap around Manila's tourist district. Hundreds of spectators lined the streets, waving Philippine flags and dousing cyclists with pails of water.

In the team race, South Korea won in 183 hours, 59 minutes, 48 seconds. The Philippines was second in 184:21:55 and Northern Luzon, a Philippine regional team, placed third in 185:14:47.

South Korea won the top team prize of 500,000 yen ($19,230).

Some 30 foreign cyclists from five countries joined the annual race after it was opened to foreign cyclists for the first time this year. (AP)

Deep Blue Beats Kasparov in Second Game to Tie Score

NEW YORK — IBM's Deep Blue supercomputer beat Russian world chess champion Garry Kasparov in the second game of their six-game rematch, evening the score in the series at one game apiece.

Deep Blue — an upgraded version of the computer Kasparov beat in Philadelphia in 1996 despite losing the first game — forced the Russian to resign at the 45th move.

The new version — nicknamed "Deeper Blue" — is twice as fast as the original and can calculate 200 million possible moves per second, or up to 100 positions within the three minutes usually allowed for a move in tournament chess.

The championship match, sponsored by the Association for Computing Machinery, will be decided over the course of six rounds.

Kasparov won the first game of this series in 45 moves Saturday, prompting IBM technicians to work to improve Deep Blue overnight. (AFP)



NEW YORK, United States (May 3): IBM scientist Murray Campbell (R) makes a move for the IBM Deep Blue computer in a game in New York against World Chess Champion Garry Kasparov (L). The monitor at rear on table relays the computers' moves to Campbell. Kasparov, making a record of the move, won the first game and leads the match, 1-0. (AFP PHOTO)

TEHRAN TIMES

Middle East Highlights

AL-KHALIL, West Bank — Israeli soldiers demolished four Palestinian homes in the West Bank town of Al-Khalil on Monday, saying they had been constructed illegally, witnesses said.

DOHA — Jordan's prime minister said on Monday his country would attend a mini-summit proposed by Egypt to help restart the stalled Middle East peace process.

"We welcome (Egyptian) President Hosni Mubarak's initiative to convene a summit of four leaders to bring the peace process back on track and we are eager to attend," Abdul-Salam al-Majali told reporters after official talks in Doha.

MARSEILLE, France — Seven Afghan employees of a France-based non-governmental organization (NGO) have been taken into custody by Taleban authorities in Kabul, the group said Monday.

The employees of Afghanistan Vaccination Immunization Center (AVICEN) were among 25 arrested "without justification" on April 28,' said the group's director Philippe Truze. Eighteen were freed on May 3.

TUNCELI, Turkey — Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan has renewed a call to Turkish authorities for dialogue on bringing the conflict in southeast Turkey to an end, according to a text of his televised comments.

"We are ready for dialogue, we have alternatives. There must at last be a Turkish and Kurdish political solution," Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Ocalan said.

NATO, Russia to Meet Again in Bid to Formalize Relationship

BRUSSELS — NATO Secretary General Javier Solana and Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov will meet again Tuesday to try to finalize an accord which Russian President Boris Yeltsin wants to sign in three weeks.

Eighty percent of the accord defining post-Cold War relations between Moscow and the alliance, against a background of NATO plans to expand up to Russia's borders, has already been agreed.

This includes the definition of a new consultative mechanism with the establishment of a permanent NATO-Russian liaison committee based in Brussels.

Tuesday's talks in Luxembourg, the fifth encounter between Solana and Primakov, will try to resolve some key outstanding differences on political and military relationships.

Up until only a few days ago the two sides were still far apart, while Yeltsin has already said he intends to sign the accord with NATO leaders in Paris on May 27.

NATO had proposed writing into the treaty a unilateral declaration that it has neither the need nor the desire to base nuclear weapons or troops in the eastern European countries which will soon be invited to join the alliance.

Russia, on the other hand, demanded an undertaking by NATO that it would "never" make such deployments or install other military infrastructure. It also wanted NATO to be considered as "a bloc" in terms of the updating of the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty (CFE) currently under negotiation.

NATO considers such concessions to be impossible without making the newcomers like the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland second-rank members of the alliance.

However at the end of last week a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright enabled "progress" to be made in the negotiations, both the Russians and Americans said.

Diplomatic sources here said that the "progress" resulted from Moscow's accceptance that NATO could make no more major concessions.

But with three weeks to go, "much remains to be settled," a diplomat said, adding that it was unlikely that Tuesday's Luxembourg meeting would be the final one.

(AFP)

Death Penalty for Those Who Sell Land to Settlers

GAZA CITY — The Palestinian Authority will impose the death penalty on Palestinians who sell land in the West Bank or East Bait-ul-Moqaddas to Israelis, the Justice Minister said on Monday.

"This is a very dangerous act and there has been a decision to ban it by putting anyone who sells even a centimeter on swift trial and to seek the death penalty against them," Frieh abu Middein told AFP.

"These people are traitors and Israel exploits them in expanding its settlements," he said, adding that he expected a few land sale cases to come to trial "over the next two weeks."

The Palestinian Cabinet decided on Saturday to punish those "implicated directly or indirectly in the sale of land."

Jewish settlements and right-wing Israeli organizations have sought in the past to buy land and houses from Palestinians in the West Bank and Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, often purchasing from owners living abroad.

Meanwhile, the Israeli government has given permission to residents of the West Bank settlement of Barkan to add 150 new homes to the community, more than doubling its size, a local official said Monday.

Arieh Ofri, head of the Shomron regional council which is responsible for settlements in the northern West Bank, told Israel radio that construction on a first phase of the expansion at Barkan would begin within weeks. *(AFP)*

UN Humanitarian Envoy Goes to Iraqi Kurdistan

BAGHDAD — UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs Yasushi Akashi arrived in northern Iraq on Monday to inspect UN relief operations in the region, which is controlled by Kurdish factions, UN officials said.

Akashi is to spend a night in the main Iraqi Kurdistan city of Arbil, controlled by the Kurdistan Democratic Party, before moving on to Sulaymaniyah, the stronghold of the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), said UN spokesman Eric Falt.

The UN envoy is to meet the "local authorities and the representatives of UN agencies charged with distributing foodstuffs" imported into Iraq under the oil-for-food agreement between Baghdad and the United Nations, said Falt.

Akashi arrived in Baghdad on Monday on a six-day mission aimed at examining the logistical obstacles preventing the distribution of humanitarian goods under the deal.

Food and medicines have been arriving in Iraq under the deal since late March but have yet to be distributed because of logistical difficulties.

2 Zionist Mercenaries Wounded

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon — Two mercenaries of the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) were wounded Monday in a roadside bombing in the Zionist state's "security zone" in southern Lebanon, security sources said.

The bomb went off as an SLA patrol passed by near the village of Al-Marj in Israel's self-declared "security zone," the sources said.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack.

A number of Lebanon-based activists groups, particularly the Hezbollah, have vowed to continue to fight Israel until it withdraws from southern Lebanon.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 2)

POURSHASB...

the Armed forces.

During the ceremony, Shahbazi thanked Dadbin for his efforts in the ground forces and described Ebadat as a brave and unknown soldier of Islam.

Brigadier General Shahbazi touched on the "brilliant" record of Pourshasb in operational, educational and staff-related affairs in the course of the Iraqi imposed war and called him a religiously-committed, efficient and seasoned officer of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

WHAT...

business and your return of capital. Today due to fluctuation of prices average investment profits cannot be ascertained definitely."

By way of conclusion, the next president is therefore called upon to carry out fundamental policy changes to correct certain defects in the system. He should confront those who generate negative influence on the country. He should spare no effort at disseminating Islamic values and should not be afraid of possible failure.

Saeed Keywan, a member of the dressmakers guild, says: "The present problems (facing the country) are concomitant to the goals of development, but in due time remarkable progress will be enjoyed in the country as a whole. If the problems are solved after the next president comes to power then he owes it to the infrastructural measures now being taken by the current government.

"The next government should pursue the same path of development and construction. He may impose changes but the development process should continue. The next government should give priority to the underprivileged and deprived strata.

"The government of President Hashemi Rafsanjani has not detailed a definite program of privatization. We should have a law that will ensure stability in business. At present certain businessmen are facing bankruptcy and this is due to instability and fluctuations in market conditions.

"Controling price fluctuations depends on a large part on our ability to control foreign currency supplies and the latter depends on policies adopted by the Central bank. However, key measures have been taken that have been effective in controlling, to a certain extent, fluctuations of prices this year."

Mohammad Taghi Khaki, a newcomer who started his career in the bazaar six months ago, says: "The next president should work only for the interests of the people, and at resolving their problems."

Asked about his salary, he said: I earn 200,000 rials per month. It is not enough for a family that lives in Tehran. A man should earn at least 600,000 rials per month to run a family (here). The next president should remove the (salary) obstacle."

Going to other nooks in the bazaar, we reach a small shop (Hojreh) where we found a lonely shopkeeper in one corner. His shop was empty. The only visible things were the posters of a presidential candidate on its walls. The shopkeeper, Mahmood Donyar, says: I Have been working in the bazaar for nearly 40 years. I know this candidate for many years. I am acquainted with his father too. I think he is very suitable for the presidency."

A young glassware seller says: "I have been working in the bazaar for nearly one and a half years. In my opinion employment is of vital importance in this country. There have been many problems facing the young generation in recent years. Poverty will force some of them to earn their livelihood through illegal means such as drug trafficking. I earn 200,000 rials per month. There are several other youths like me. With such a low income they have to earn their livelihood through any of those dirty jobs."

He goes on: "The next president should eradicate unemployment. He should take this problem of youths seriously. Solving this problem will reduce corruption in society. Fluctuations of prices have created serious problems for the country. Those who are running low on capital are main losers.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

CHECHNYA...

Meanwhile Chechen warlord Salman Raduyev claimed responsibility Sunday for two bomb attacks in southern Russia which killed a total of four people and wounded 24 and threatened more violence next week in an interview with private Russian television channel NTV.

"The explosions at Armavir and Pyatigorsk were perpetrated on my personal orders," Raduyev said.

An attack two weeks ago on the Armavir train station killed two and wounded nine.

A similar blast Monday on the Pyatigorsk train station left another two dead and 15 injured.

Raduyev confirmed "having given the orders" to two women suspects detained by police after the explosion.

"These two women have been arrested because of me. For this reason, I have officially warned Russia that if just one hair on their heads is touched, I vow by Allah, Russia will regret it.

"I will use chemical weapons in revenge," he said.

The warlord also threatened fresh attacks in Russia next week.

They would not be executed by Chechens, he said. "We're not crazy. We use Russians because many of them are poor."

Saturday, Yuri Shchekshikhin, a journalist for the weekly Novaya Gazeta told Echo of Moscow Radio that Raduyev had called him to say the train stations of Saint Petersburg and Voronezh were to be targeted next.

Responding to Rudayev's claim of responsibility, Russian Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov said "It is clear today that the Chechen leadership isn't united and that (Chechen President Aslan) Maskhadov can no longer control the situation."

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

EGYPT...

dent Hafez al-Assad who voiced pessimism and said that "all the doors" to peace were closed during a press conference with Mubarak on Thursday.

"I think that President Assad was right to say he was pessimistic but ... there are still some doors open," Mussa said.

He called for stepped up diplomatic efforts, inter-Arab coordination and contacts with the European and U.S. parties to keep the doors open.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat left for home on Monday after discussing stalled Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Mussa.

Arafat made no statements after his talks with Mubarak and declined to speak to reporters at Cairo international airport.

On Sunday night he emerged from more than two hours of talks with Mussa saying he did not expect any new ideas to come from U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross who begins a new mission in the region this week.

Ross is scheduled to arrive in the region after a meeting on Tuesday between Arafat and Israeli President Ezer Weizman, hoping that their encounter will give a boost to his attempts to relaunch peace negotiations.

Palestinian-Israeli peace talks have been effectively frozen since Israel launched construction of a new Jewish settlement in historically Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas on March 18.

Meanwhile, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Monday ahead of a meeting with President Hosni Mubarak that he did not expect new ideas to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks from U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross.

Arafat was speaking after more than two hours of talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa late Sunday during which he stressed that "all options were open before us in the face of Israeli action."

Asked if he expected Ross to carry new proposals to push forward the peace process, Arafat said: "I don't believe he will bring new ideas with him." *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

VELAYATI...

eign Ministry directors general, will hold talks with Syrian officials on latest situation in the Middle East and Tehran-Damascus ties.

(Contd from Pg.4)

IRAN-CHINA...

agreement signed Sunday, both countries are to have representative offices in the other country.

China has agreed to offer Iran investments for short term, medium term and long-term purposes.

The visiting deputy prime minister of China and a Chinese delegation that he was leading in Tehran departed for home after having concluded the letters of understanding Sunday.

(Contd. from Pg. 10)

MATSUSHITA ...

be in charge in broadcasting.

BSkyB is currently planning to launch a similar digital broadcasting project with Sony Corp. in Japan.

BSkyB to Launch Digital TV Venture

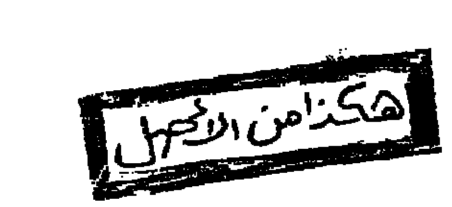
Meanwhile according to a Reuter report from London, British Sky Broadcasting plans to launch 200 digital television channels in Britain combining interactive services such as home banking, shopping and the Internet, the *Financial Times* reported on Monday.

The newspaper said BSkyB, which would announce its plans on Wednesday, had finalized details of a £700 million ($432 million) joint venture with British Telecommunications, Midland Bank and Japanese electronics company Matsushita to form British Interactive Broadcasting (BIB).

BIB's main function would be to provide heavy subsidies for the digital decoders which consumers would need to receive the new service on their televisions, the *Financial Times* said.

These would retail at £500 but the aim was to sell them initially at about £200 to get the boxes and associated services on to the market.

(Dispatches)



Key Mexico Elections Loom as Clinton Makes Politically Balanced Visit

MEXICO CITY — U.S. President Bill Clinton will be walking on eggshells during his trip here this week, trying to avoid almost-certain criticism here of meddling in domestic politics.

Clinton's trip, his first south of the 3,000-kilometer (1,800-mile) border that separates the United States and Mexico since he took office in January 1993, comes just two months before crucial mid-term elections in which the ruling party appears likely to suffer important losses.

Not wanting to appear to endorse the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) by his meetings with President Ernesto Zedillo, Clinton also plans to meet with the country's leading opposition leaders.

If the polls are correct, the PRI, in power nationally for 68 years, could lose its majority in Congress for the first time in the July 6 elections, as well as the key mayoralty of Mexico City. The PRI also risks to lose several of the six governor seats being contested.

The White House — mindful of Mexican concerns about sovereignty — has preemptively denied Clinton will use his two-day stay to advance any particular political agenda.

Clinton's special adviser on Latin American affairs, Thomas McLarty, said last week in Washington that the U.S. president's meetings with opposition leaders "does underscore that you have a democracy (in Mexico) that is opening, that is strengthening, that is more pluralistic."

But Clinton's arrival coincides with criticism on both the political left and right that the government is retreating from its earlier promises of reform and perhaps returning to old practices such as ballot-box stuffing, according to opposition Congressman Adolfo Aguilar.

The meetings could be interpreted as endorsing a weak, possibly corrupt electoral system, Aguilar said.

"The United States is tied (to Mexico) because it must show support for Zedillo, while the Mexican government is tied (to the U.S.) because it is increasingly dependent on its support from survival," Aguilar said.

Aguilar said that "whatever Clinton's message will be on the (Mexican) political process, either direct or indirect, he will send the wrong message."

McLarty admitted that Clinton's trip comes as Mexico is "undergoing a profound period of change in the political system."

And with a major shake-up expected in the political make-up of the country dominated for nearly seven decades by the same party, the changes could be the most significant since Mexico's revolution at the turn of the century. *(AFP)*

Hong Kong Gets New Democratic Party as Handover to China Looms

HONG KONG — Independent legislator Christine Loh launched a new Hong Kong political party that will take its place in the democratic camp just weeks before the British territory returns to Chinese rule.

Loh, who was elected to Hong Kong's Legislative Council in 1995, but will cede her place when China's appointed provisional legislature takes over on July 1, urged Hong Kong's citizens to take control of their own future.

"If people fail to seize the moment and remain bystanders to the future, they will not be able to blame a colonial system anymore," Loh said at the launch of her Citizens Party.

"The promise (by China) of a high degree of autonomy demands that we take on the responsibility for our own advancement."

China has promised to allow Hong Kong to maintain its capitalist system for 50 years after the handover, but its decision to replace the elected legislature with an appointed one has raised doubts about its inteations.

Like other democracy supporters, Loh has refused to join the provisional legislature appointed by Beijing and will lose her seat when Hong Kong returns to Chinese rule. But the Citizens Party intends to field candidates for elections promised before June 1998.

Loh said Hong Kong's politics should not be limited to a "chosen elite" of a chief executive and a handful of bureaucrats and VIPs.

"We reckon that the market for politics is not saturated in Hong Kong," she said at a news conference.

"Politics is relatively new. We are still at the stage where we are still asking ourselves what our values are."

She hinted that the Citizens Party, which has 13 other founders — all active in social movements but newcomers to politics — might form a future coalition with Hong Kong's Democratic Party led by Martin Lee, considered persona non grata by Beijing.

Lee, whose party is Hong Kong's largest, was among those invited to the party's launch Sunday.

"A new party will give people more choice and that is something to be welcomed," said Lee. "When we formed the Democratic Party, we recognized that other democrats will not join us for a variety of reasons."

He said he would "certainly" cooperate with the new party.

The Citizens Party intends to adopt a "non-adversarial" approach to Hong Kong's Beijing-backed parties, Loh said, adding, "We will acknowledge ideas coming from other parties if we agree with them."

She said she envisaged a competition based on "polices and ideas" with her adversaries and not on an exchange of insults.

The new party already has a logo — the Chinese character for citizen and a check mark denoting choice on a green background reflecting Loh's environmental concerns — but no office as it does not yet have the funds.

"The fundraising process is underway and we hope to be able to set up an office in July," she said. *(AFP)*

Indian PM Hopes for Warmer Ties With Pakistan

NEW DELHI — Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral has said he hopes a face-to-face meeting with his Pakistani counterpart next week will lead to warmer relations between the longtime enemies.

"We will try to find a way out of the deadlock in Indo-Pakistan relations and I hope we will find a way to improve relations to our mutual benefit," United News of India (UNI) quoted Gujral as saying.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) quoted India's new prime minister as telling dignitaries in the northern state of Punjab that he expected a positive result from the meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on May 12.

Gujral and Sharif are to hold talks ahead of a three-day summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in the capital of the Maldives, Male.

The meeting would follow two rounds of high-level talks which resumed in March after three years of bitterness between the South Asian neighbors.

It would be the first meeting between the prime ministers of the two countries since April 1993, when Nawaz Sharif and then Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao met on the sidelines of a SAARC conference.

Gujral told the audience in Punjab that as foreign minister under former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, he had instructed Indian officials to refrain from making critical statements towards Pakistan.

Last month before being named prime minister, Gujral held upbeat talks in New Delhi with Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan. As a goodwill gesture, they agreed to free several hundred fishermen detained for illegally fishing in each other's waters.

During his one-day visit to Punjab, Gujral said India wanted Pakistan to thrive and was willing to increase trade.

"Let Pakistan be prosperous as a prosperous Pakistan will be to India's benefit," UNI quoted him as saying.

Gujral said in a bid to build mutual trust he had allowed the export of 14,000 tons of Indian sugar to Pakistan by rail.

(Reuter)



PORT SAID, Egypt (April 28): Hundreds of Egyptian rally in Port Said at the northern entrance of the Suez Canal, around a model of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu surrounded by his ministers and preparing to slit the throat of a dove of peace.

(AFP PHOTO)

Joseph Kennedy's Political Star Dims in Massachusetts

WASHINGTON — The 44-year-old son of the late Robert Kennedy could become the first member of this legendary political clan to lose an election on its home turf of Massachusetts.

A recent survey by the *Boston Globe* newspaper revealed that Joseph Kennedy, a Democratic candidate for governor next year, has a 38 percent negative rating among voters.

That figure means Kennedy likely will face a bruising political fight with another Democratic candidate, State Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, and with the probable Republican nominee, Paul Cellucci.

Analysts say a familiar problem haunts Kennedy: bad publicity surrounding Kennedy men.

Kennedy's ex-wife, Sheila, is on a national book tour to plug "shattered faith," an unflattering description of their 12-year marriage and her failed bid to prevent the Catholic Church from granting her husband an annulment.

Kennedy, a U.S. Congressman from Massachusetts whose father was assassinated while running for president in 1968, is now married to his former secretary.

Then there's the unsavory matter involving his brother and close adviser, Michael. Reports say the 39-year-old father of three had a five-year affair with his children's babysitter that started when she was 14 years old.

The local district attorney is looking into the allegations.

A Kennedy victory was to have been easy, especially since William Weld, Massachusett's popular Republican governor, is probably going to be the next U.S. ambassador to Mexico.

But Harshhbarger has become a formidable rival, not only because of the annulment controversy and Michael's problems but also because of newspaper reports that U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy, Joseph's uncle, tried to get Harshhbarger a top federal job, clearing the way for his nephew.

"I'm flattered, but I intend to run for governor regardless," Harshhbarger said. "Basically, I've gotten what I wanted all along — an even playing field with the Kennedys."

In 1970, Massachusetts voters reelected Edward Kennedy to the U.S. Senate after he was involved in the drowning death of Mary Jo Kopechne in Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts.

Some political observers say they may be less forgiving this time.

"The annulment controversy underscored the notion that the Kennedys mistreat their women and act as if they're above the law," said John Kellogg, executive editor of the *Lowell Sun*, a newspaper north of Boston.

"Then the allegations about Michael seemed to confirm it all over again. All the various past scandals get dredged up, and it remains to be seen whether Joe Kennedy can be as resilient as Ted has been or whether he has a real problem on his hands," he said.

But Lou Dinatale, director of the McCormack Institute of Politics at the University of Massachusetts, said the latest wave of bad publicity may not be enough to end the state's romance with the Kennedys.

"Their ability to absorb hits and come back and win is legendary," he said.

(AFP)

Wish You Were Here...87 Years Later

COPENHAGEN — A letter posted in Copenhagen in 1909 finally arrived at its destination in April after spending 87 years in the Russian postal system.

The letter was mailed by an eight-year-old girl in Agersted.

The letter was sent by mistake to Tsarist Russia, from where it was sent back without comment to the Danish postal authorities last month.

"We very much regret this delay," wrote the head of the mail service for the northern Danish region of Frederikshavn to a relative of the now-deceased addressee. (AFP)

Indian Temple Raises Millions Shaving Heads

NEW DELHI, India — India's richest Hindu temple raised millions of dollars this year from offerings of hair by pilgrims.

The Venkateswara Temple in the southern town of Tirupati earned about 65 million rupees ($1.82 million) in 1996-97 through the sale of human hair, Press Trust of India news agency reported.

To fulfill their vows, millions of devotees who visit the shrine every year shave their heads, saying they are offering one of their most precious possessions to the Lord. (AP)

No Agreement in Korean Food Talks, But Both Sides Still Optimistic

BEIJING — Red Cross delegates from rival North and South Korea broke off talks Monday on direct delivery of growing food aid to the starving North without agreement, but promised further negotiations.

The landmark talks between the two sides ended without agreement on expanding direct delivery routes from South to North Korea, said South Korean Red Cross Secretary General Lee Byong-Woong.

"We did not get any single concrete agreement...but both sides exchanged views in a good atmosphere and promised to meet again to discuss the issues," Lee said.

"The next meeting will be arranged through the direct South-North telephone lines in Panmunjom (in the demilitarized zone dividing North and South Korea)," he added.

Talks reached an impasse when the South called for an expansion of direct transport links but the North insisted on first knowing how much aid would be provided and on what scale.

"Regrettably, the talks could not continue because the South Korean side did not specify the size or dates of shipments," North Korean chief delegate Paek Yong-Ho said.

"We cannot say we are disappointed or satisfied...but we did not enter into the substance of the matter. Without knowing the quantity and the kind of the relief goods how can we discuss about transportation?" he added.

South Korea's Red Cross, which currently has 3.5 billion won ($3.8 million) in donations to buy food for the North, said it could not estimate the scale until it had an agreement on direct transport and on monitoring the aid. (AP)

Coal Mine Accident Kills 31 in East China

BEIJING — A gas explosion at a coal mine in eastern China has killed 31 miners, state radio said on Monday.

The explosion occurred last Friday at the Nanxiye Coal Mine in Laiwu in eastern Shandong Province, the radio said.

A total of 31 people were killed, it said and blamed the explosion on the mine's ventilation system, which was below standard.

China has issued a string of directives to improve safety in its mines with explosions and accidents, mainly at improperly maintained village level mines, killing up to 10,000 miners each year. (Reuter)

UK PLedges Fresh Start With Europe

BRUSSELS — Britain told its European Union partners on Monday it wanted a fresh start in relations and pledged to work with the EU not against it.

"We want to work with you as colleagues in a shared enterprise, not using the language of opponents. Europe, for the new British government, is an opportunity, not a threat," Doug Henderson, Britain's new minister for Europe, told representatives of EU states meeting to negotiate a new EU treaty.

In the first meeting between a new British minister and EU counterparts, Henderson said Britain wanted to make the European Union more democratic, more open and more relevant to ordinary people.

In direct contrast to the former ruling Conservatives he said the Labour government would end the British opt-out from the EU's social chapter, agree to move to more qualified majority voting in certain areas and would support an employment chapter in the new EU treaty to be adopted in mid-June in Amsterdam. (Reuter)

Kabila Gives Mobutu Eight Days to Leave or Be Pushed Out



POINTE NOIRE, Congo (May 4): The participants of the negotiations between Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko and rebel commander Laurent Kabila gather for a press conference at the end of talks on a South African naval ship. From left at the table are Thabo Mbeki, (South African vice president), Mobutu Sese Seko, (Zairian president), Nelson Mandela, (South African president), Laurent Desire Kabila, (Zairian rebel leader), and Mohammed Sahnoun, (UN special envoy). (AFP PHOTO)

LUBUMBASHI, Zaire — Zaire's rebel leader told Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko on Monday he "perishes with his power" or hands over control of the country in eight days.

Troops loyal to rebel chief Laurent Desire Kabila were reported within 100 kilometers (60 miles) of Kinshasa, Zaire's sprawling capital of some 6 million people.

After Sunday's first face-to-face meeting with Mobutu on a South African naval vessel, Kabila said he gave Mobutu eight days to step down. In the meantime, the rebel chief said there would be no cease-fire.

"He has to chose to relinquish power, and he is safeguarded, or, he perishes with his power," Kabila told reporters in English a day after his return from face-to-face talks with the ailing Zairian leader.

At those talks Sunday aboard a South African navy vessel, Mobutu refused the rebels' list of conditions. The only thing apparently agreed on by the two men was that they would meet again.

Meanwhile, Bill Richardson, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations who was instrumental in setting up the shipboard talks returned to Lubumbashi Monday and immediately began talks with Kabila after the news conference.

Kabila denied that he had ever agreed to a cease-fire while the negotiating process was going on.

"Who declared a cease-fire? Absolutely not," he said in response to a question about a statement Sunday from UN envoy Mohammed Sahnoun that he had agreed to a temporary cease-fire as a "gesture of good will" before the meeting.

"Cease-fire is not in the language of President Kabila," interjected the rebels' foreign affairs spokesman Bizima Karaha. (AP)

Italy Repatriates 180 Albanian "Undesirables"

ROME, Italy — Italy sent home 180 Albanians, classified as "undesirables", just hours after they arrived on a boat packed with more than 1,000 refugees at the southern port of Bari, coastguards said on Monday.

A port official said the ageing tanker was carrying 1,229 Albanians, including many women and children, when it docked on Sunday. Most were sent to refugee centers around the country but some were immediately repatriated.

"Two boats with 180 undesirables have left for Albania this morning," a coastguard official said, adding that five of the ship's crew had been detained in Bari on charges of running a lucrative traffic in refugees.

Interior Minister Giorgio Napolitano indicated that many more from this latest wave of Albanian immigrants to hit Italy might soon be sent packing.

"Yesterday (Sunday) there was a large arrival... of men, women and children that one might better call potential illegal immigrants," Napolitano said in a radio interview.

"We will carry out investigations, sending back those who have no evident need of protection or are not fleeing to Italy because of risk to their life," he added. (Reuter)

BARI, Italy (May 4): Some of the 1,000 Albanians aboard ship Irini wait to disembark in the Italian port of Bari. The ship left Albania May 3 to make the 230-kilometer (140-mile) trip to Italy, after picking up its passengers on a beach on the northern coast. Dozens of Italian security forces and Red Cross workers were present to receive the refugees. (AFP PHOTO)

Indonesian Mining Industry Stunned by Bre-X Report Results

JAKARTA — An announcement by Canadian mining firm Bre-X Minerals Ltd that its supposed discovery of the world's largest gold deposit was a falsification has shocked Indonesia's mining industry.

Bre-x minerals, a Calgary-based company operating in Busang in east Kalimantan, has dominated headlines in the mining world for the past three months.

Controversy has raged over claims and doubts about a gold deposit it supposedly found which was said to have contained as much as 200 million ounces of gold.

The Indonesian government said that it would take unspecified action if the Busang find turned out to be a hoax.

Mines and Energy Minister Ida Bagus Sujana said if Bre-X statements that the find was a hoax were true, "the government will immediately take actions, whether it be sanctions or other actions."

Bre-X President David Walsh, whose company boasted of finding the Busang deposit, admitted in a statement Sunday in Calgary that independent auditor Strathcona Minerals Services Ltd could not confirm the presence of gold.

"The report instead indicates that the company's belief about the size of the Busang II reserve was based on falsified data." (AFP)

Polish Passenger Train Crashes

WARSAW, Poland — At least 10 people died Monday when three carriages of a fast-moving passenger train traveling through northwestern Poland jumped the track and hurtled into a freight train parked on a parallel track, police said.

At least a dozen people were injured, police said. There could be even more casualties, they said.

"Carriages are crushed," said police inspector Bogdan Michonski of Szczecin, a northwestern city near the crash site. (AP)

ETA Bombs Damage Spanish Military Base

BILBAO, Spain — A bomb planted by Basque separatists ETA exploded at a military base near the Basque city of Vitoria on Monday causing heavy damage but no injuries, officials said.

The bomb, which was preceded by a warning call to a newspaper in the name of ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom), went off in an instruction center for recruiters, the civil governor's office said.

An hour later, the civil guards detonated a second bomb that had been planted at the base, police said.

The explosions coincided with the funeral of a civil guardsman, Jose Manuel Garcia, who was killed on Saturday by a gunman as he relaxed off duty at a village bar in the northern Basque region.

Officials blamed Garcia's death on ETA, which has killed some 800 people since starting its campaign of violence for Basque independence in 1968. (Reuter)

ANALYSTS:

World's "Biggest Gold Find" Was a Hoax Without Precedent

TORONTO — What was hailed as the world's biggest-ever gold find in the Indonesian jungle was a hoax of a size "without precedent in the history of mining anywhere in the world," an expert analyst revealed Sunday.

A report by Strathcona Minerals, an independent analyst hired by Bre-X minerals which had claimed to have found the world's richest gold field at Busang in Indonesia, was released late Sunday by Bre-X.

The Toronto Stock Exchange immediately announced that in agreement with the Alberta, Montreal and Nasdaq exchanges, it would halt trading in common shares of Bre-X when the North American markets opened Monday.

"We very much regret ... (that) an economic gold deposit has not been identified in the southeast zone of the Busang property, and is unlikely to be," said Graham Farquharson, vice president of Strathcona in a brief statement.

"The magnitude of the tampering with core samples that we believe has occurred and resulting falsification of assay values at Busang, is of a scale and over a period of time and with a precision that, to our knowledge, is without precedent in the history of mining anywhere in the world," he said.

Until now, Bre-X officials had stood by their claims that the Busang gold field had at least 71 million ounces of gold and perhaps as much as 200 million ounces.

Announcing a stop to Bre-X trading, the Toronto Stock Exchange said it was being imposed "in light of the extremely negative report from Strathcona minerals."

Bre-X president David Walsh, quoted in his own company's statement, spoke of his company continuing to do business, a prospect many analysts find impossible to imagine.

"It's paramount to us," he said, "to redi.ect our energy to protecting the company's remaining assets for the benefit of shareholders."

Canadian and Indonesian officials are expected now to conduct one of the most thorough probes of any Canadian company ever-undertaken.

And analysts said those investigations are likely to include the re-opening of an investigation in Indonesia of the death of Bre-X's chief geologist in Busang, Mike de Guzman, who reportedly leapt from a helicopter in a suicide jump in March.

Just after De Guzman's death, Strathcona issued its first report questioning the accuracy of previous claims of the gold reserves at the mine. Freeport McMoran, a U.S. mining company brought in by Bre-X as a a partner in Busang, issued a separate report describing the gold finds as negligible.

Indonesian authorities reported that they had found a suicide note addressed by De Guzman to his wife, explaining the reason for taking his life was that he had an incurable illness.

It was later discovered that De Guzman, a Filipino, had four wives — in different countries.

Indonesian Mining Industry Stunned

Meanwhile according to AFP reports from Jakarta, the announcement by the Bre-X has shocked Indonesia's mining industry.

Bre-X has dominated headlines in the mining world for the past three months.

Controversy has raged over claims and doubts about a gold deposit it found which was said to have contained some 71 million ounces of gold.

The Indonesian government had no immediate comment Monday to the announcement.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Mines and Energy said he had "no comment to make" and he would not have anything to say "in the near future."

The president of one major company involved in gold prospecting in Indonesia said the case was unprecedented.

"It's incredible, this denial," said Pt Nabire Bakti mining firm president Alain Liger.

"There have already been cases of tampering with mining samples but never on this scale," said Liger, whose Franco-Indonesian joint venture firm is also prospecting for gold in Indonesia.

"It is really amazing that no suspicions were raised during the whole affair," which lasted more than two years since Bre-X first announced positive findings at Busang, he added.

Jakarta in February announced that Bre-X would have a 45 percent stake in the Busang project, the Indonesian government 10 percent, Freeport McMoran 15 percent, and Indonesian firm Nusamba 30 percent.

Nusamba is run by Mohammad (Bob) Hasan and is majority owned by foundations controlled by President Suharto.

(AFP)

Yemenis Brace for More Economic Reforms

SANAA — Thirteen-year-old Nabeel Quhali says he's been lunching at the same restaurant nearly every day for the past three years — a grimy stall on a dirt lane where he eats a potato and egg sandwich for 15 rials (12 cents).

The man who slices the potatoes and sprinkles them with hot pepper for flavor complains that even bargains like those are not turning over decent profits these days.

"People eat here because the sandwiches are cheap. Business is so-so," said Saleh al-Mitai, a father of four. "There's no work and people are tired."

Nearby, black market money dealers stand idle at a busy intersection, offering thick stacks of 100-rial notes to motorists.

But, unlike the days after the 1994 civil war, few cars are stopping to exchange dollars for rials.

The culprit, the dealers say, is recent political stability, a crucial ingredient in Yemen's drive to press ahead with economic reforms, lure foreign investment and bury animosity between North and South, which merged in 1990.

New Austerity Measures Could Prove Sensitive

Yemen may be scoring points with the International Monetary Fund, but the Middle East's poorest state with per capita income of just $280 a year is hard pressed to tackle wide unemployment among one of the world's fastest-growing populations.

Upcoming austerity measures and efforts to cut heavy state subsidies could also prove sensitive.

In 1995 Yemen, which relies on oil for 75 percent of income, began an economic reform package with the IMF and world Bank.

A small independent oil producer with daily output of some 385,000 barrels, it has received soft loans from several states under the reform package which has included raising the prices of fuel and electricity, water and telephone rates.

Since the program was launched, the country has made significant gains, according to diplomats and the World Bank.

"Yemen has done well so far. It has pushed through the big economic reforms. The exchange rate has been unified, it has cut the budget deficit and inflation has been licked," said Osman Ahmed, the bank's resident representative in Yemen.

Climate for Foreign Investment Now Better

Inflation slowed to 11 percent in 1996 from about 70 percent in 1994, Ahmed told Reuters. "This year could be much lower."

He said Yemen had created a better environment for private investment by deregulating investment licensing and trade had been liberalized through the easing of restrictions.

Yemen says it attracted $1.75 billion in foreign investment since 1992 and hopes tourism, despite a spate of kidnappings of Westerners by tribesmen, will help the economy recover.

It has managed to cut the budget deficit, with this year's 313 billion rial budget forecasting a deficit of 2.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), better than previous targets.

But there are potential minefields on the horizon as Yemen prepares to implement a third phase of reforms.

It must convince Yemenis that cutting $400 million in annual wheat subsidies will deliver long-term relief from hardships.

"The bulk of the subsidies benefit people other than the poor, including middlemen. What needs to be done is to cut those huge subsidies while protecting the poor," Ahmed said.

"The removal of subsidies will be heated," added a diplomat.

High Unemployment Is Major Problem

Raising fuel prices could also prove to be a treacherous reform. In 1995 riots erupted after hikes in diesel prices.

But perhaps the biggest obstacle is unemployment among the 16 million people, expanding at a rapid 3.7 percent a year.

Officials put the jobless rate at about 30 percent.

"I have been looking for a job for a year," said Abdullah al-Roumi, standing on a corner getting a buzz from a huge ball of the narcotic green leaf qat bulging in his left cheek.

Diversification from oil and reducing state dominance of the economy are also prime targets. In January foreign firms signed a deal for a $5 billion liquefied natural gas project expected to start exports of five million tonnes a year by 2001.

Although a step in the right direction, the move into gas means Yemen will still be vulnerable to world oil price swings.

What is important, analyst say, is to boost non-oil GDP, forecast to grow at a real rate of close to six percent this year, driving overall real 1997 GDP up five percent.

Part of this will involve privatization. Yemen has taken the first move by selling 10 small firms. But offloading major enterprises like telecommunications, ports and the airline, although being considered, will take longer, analysts said.

Another integral part of this diversification is the revival of the port of Aden and the $500 million development of the Aden Free Zone to restore Yemen's position as a key staging post on the shipping route between Europe and Asia.

(Reuter)

U.S. Business Still Hamstrung in Vietnam

HANOI— When President Bill Clinton lifted the economic embargo against Hanoi more than two years ago, U.S. business clamored for a place on Vietnam's dance card.

But initial infatuation has given way to a sober realization that the young debutante can be a tough partner, whose potential for frustration and disillusionment is proving as strong as her charms.

And while U.S. companies face the same headaches as any foreign investor here — a thicket of bureaucratic obstacles, a capricious legal system and rampant corruption — U.S. companies say the absence of a trade agreement and access to export finance programs makes it extra tough to do business.

"The pace of economic normalization has been slower than anyone had hoped and has made for a more difficult environment. U.S. companies are still quite far behind," said Virginia Foote, the Hanoi-based president of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council, a private bilateral trade association.

What's more, while businessmen here acknowledge the symbolic importance of the arrival next Friday of Douglas "Pete" Peterson as the first U.S. ambassador to Hanoi —he spent more than six years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi during the Vietnam war — the Vietnam syndrome is not the issue.

"This is Vietnam, and that is part of the equation, but only a part," said Norris Hickerson, the Hanoi-based country manager of Digital Equipment Corp International. His main concern is moving ahead on the economic front.

So is Tony Salzman's. As president of V-TRAC, the authorized dealer for Caterpillar, Salzman says his business is hamstrung by the absence of U.S. export import bank (Exim Bank) financing.

"It's a terrible impediment. The U.S. is the only OECD country that doesn't provide export financing support. The Finns, Brits, Australians, French, and Germans all have government assistance," he explained.

Salzman is not the only one having trouble competing.

U.S. giants such as Boeing, United Technologies and AT and T have barely made a dent in the Vietnamese market because financing is so hard to obtain without Exim Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation Funding and other U.S. government financing programs.

Because Vietnam is a communist country, these programs cannot be unlocked unless Clinton waives the Jackson Vannik Amendment, which requires Vietnam to show its citizens can freely emigrate.

That in turn would pave the way for most favoured nation (MFN) status for Vietnam which would have knock-on effects for U.S. businesses here.

Many companies are already preparing for that eventuality.

IBM, Motorola, Ford Motor Company, Mobil Oil, Coca Cola and other fortune 500 companies have returned here and have the financial muscle and patience to wait for their investments to pay off.

But others have already reached the end of their tether.

Bank of America pulled out its expatriate manager in January, while American oil company (AMOCO) closed its doors at the end of 1996 altogether.

Chrysler looks likely to follow suit and has reportedly scrapped plans to build a 192 million dollar joint venture plant which has yet to break ground.

The largest U.S. investment licenced to date, a 247-million-dollar joint venture tourist resort at China beach, collapsed after bitter and irreconcilable differences between Vietnamese and U.S. partners.

"The danger is that people might lose interest and Vietnam better watch to make sure the flame doesn't go out. If people don't think projects will come to fruition, they will move to another country where things can happen," said Digital's Hickerson.

(AFP)

Prominent Aussies Join Fight Against Packer Media Takeover

SYDNEY — Eighty prominent Australians warned against a further concentration of media ownership Monday as the government considers sanctioning a takeover of the Fairfax Press by television magnate Kerry Packer.

The 80, representing a broad section of the community and all shades of political opinion, told Prime Minister John Howard that too much of the media is already owned by too few people and ownership should not be further concentrated.

The government is close to a decision on whether to relax 10-year-old cross-media ownership laws which bar Packer from increasing his 15 percent stake in Fairfax without selling his top-rating nine network television station.

Comments by Howard last week fired speculation that a takeover by Packer would be approved although Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer denied Monday that any deal had been done.

"Let me say the prime minister, at a right time, will announce whatever the government finally decides on these matters and there has been no deal — no deal whatsoever," Fischer said.

Rupert Murdoch already owns 60 percent of the Australian press and if Packer were allowed to acquire the Fairfax Press it would mean the two would control virtually all of it with the exception of the Australian Broadcasting Corp. (ABC) which is currently in a battle over funding cuts.

The John Fairfax Ltd. stable includes three of Australia's four most influential papers — the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age of Melbourne*, both highly prized for their lucrative classified revenue, and the *Australian Financial Review*.

Signatories to the letter published by the Australian include former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and a number of his former ministers, Cheryl Kernot, leader of the centrist Australian Democrats, churchmen and Stars of the Arts.

"Though we come from many walks of life and all sides of politics, we share a common belief that Australia's media will serve this country best by being as diverse and independent as possible," the letter said.

Kernot warned that her party, which is strongly represented in the upper house Senate, might have to move promptly to call a Senate inquiry into cross-media ownership laws.

The signatories said they were not objecting to any proprietor owning particular papers or television station, but added: "We say simply that too few own too many already and the number of proprietors in Australia should not be further reduced.

"Australia is a country of many strong and independent voices. We believe it's your government's responsibility to see that those voices speak through a strong, competitive and independent media."

Media Union Secretary Anne Britton said the letter was a clear indication that a broad cross section of the community was disturbed by the government's proposal to abandon the cross-media ownership restrictions.

(AFP)

Zaire's Zoo Animals Close to Death

LUBUMBASHI, Zaire — The few animals remaining in rusting cages in the Lubumbashi zoo are close to death by starvation.

The crocodiles eat stones to fill their bellies, and the monkeys are skinny-limbed and lethargic.

In this overgrown 16-hectare zoo — founded by the Belgian colonialists in 1932 and once a showpiece — there are no signs saying "Don't feed the animals."

There were more than 1,700 here in 1972.

"Most died of starvation," says director Theophile Ngoy Muana Bute.

Now, there are just 24 left — a few crocodiles, monkeys and baboons, an emaciated jackal, a tired chimpanzee left behind by a departing expatriate, and a Gabonese viper, in a glass cage. The aquarium is empty, and so is the section for nocturnal animals.

Some of the most spectacular animals went to the Kinshasa Zoo, Ngoy said, but he was not allowed to hunt for replacements in nearby forests, "for policy reasons."

When a deranged man jumped into the crocodile enclosure in November last year, the crocs dragged him under water and tore his limbs off, Ngoy said.

Visitors reported that to a nearby army post, and soldiers came and shot the four Nile crocodiles dead.

Then they took the bodies back to their post. Crocodile meat is a delicacy here.

The zoo is a microcosm of all that is wrong in Zaire.

The staff say they have not been paid for the past year-and-a-half.

The money for their salaries, for maintenance, and for food for the animals was budgeted, Ngoy said, but it did not reach the zoo.

"It was controlled by an individual, used for travel ... expensive cars ..."

Now, there are just 24 left — a few crocodiles, monkeys and baboons, an emaciated jackal, a tired chimpanzee left behind by a departing expatriate, and a Gabonese viper, in a glass cage. The aquarium is empty, and so is the section for nocturnal animals.

The entry fee to the zoo is the equivalent of 20 cents.

That money goes to buy food for the animals, Ngoy says, but only 10 or 20 people visit the zoo each week, giving it an income of around $20 a month.

It survives — just — because those visitors are mostly the same people who return each week and bring food for the animals, who eat every two, three, or four days.

Some of the visitors are resident expatriates.

At least one is a hotelier, and two are in the meat trade, Ngoy says, but he cannot ask them to do more, to replace the authorities who should be providing the money.

One regular visitor, a Belgian woman who has lived here for some 30 years, picks up the bill each time a veterinarian is needed.

The zoo has dozens of fruit trees — bananas, guavas, mangoes ... but they are all are out of season at the moment.

The visitors often leave small tips for the staff, but not enough for them to live on, or send their children to school in a society where parents club together to pay the teachers because some official is pocketing their salaries.

The zoo has 33 staff on the non-existent payroll, but Ngoy says that most have lost interest in the animals, spending almost all of their time growing vegetables to sustain their families.

That leaves him with a core of seven or eight to look after the animals and visitors, but lacking basic equipment.

Now, he hopes, everything may change.

The rebels under Laurent Kabila captured this southern city last month, and Ngoy has written to the new provincial governor, Gaetan Kakuji, to appeal for funding.

The zoo was once "the pride of the city," he wrote, but had been looted.

"Now, it is completely abandoned and totally dilapidated ... a shadow of its former self," he said.

"We seek funding, the authority to capture animals to restock the zoo, and a reasonable entry fee." (AFP)

Truth Body to Order Winnie to Testify

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa's Truth Commission is to order the controversial ex-wife of President Nelson Mandela, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, to testify about four grisly murders, three of which she is accused of ordering, a press report said here.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is probing apartheid-era crimes, will subpoena Madikizela-Mandela in connection with the killings of four youth activists, Johannesburg's weekly *City Press* said.

Included is the 1989 murder of Stompie Seipei, the teenaged supporter of the one-time controversial Mandela Football Club, whom Madikizela-Mandela was convicted of kidnapping, the newspaper noted.

Winnie, who attracted fame for her vocal anti-apartheid protests during the 27 years her husband spent in political detention, was sentenced to six years for the kidnapping, although the term was later scrapped and she was never jailed.

The man convicted of the Seipei killing, Jerry Richardson, who coached the Mandela Football Club, has claimed in a written submission that Madikizela-Mandela ordered that murder and those of at least two other activists, the newspaper said.

Richardson, who is serving a life term for the Seipei killing, has applied to the Truth Commission for amnesty, the report added.

He has also named several other senior members of the now-ruling African National Congress (ANC), which Mandela leads, as knowing about the alleged circumstances surrounding Seipei's murder, the report added.

Besides the Seipei killing, Richardson claims two youths who disappeared without a trace — Lolo Sono and Siboniso Shabalala — were also murdered on Madikizela-Mandela's instructions, the newspaper said.

Richardson has admitted involvement in slitting the throat of a fourth woman, Kuki Zwane, who was accused of being an informer for police during the apartheid era, the report added.

The controversial ex-wife of Mandela is likely to be subpoenaed in the next few weeks, the report said.

"In our own investigations into allegations regarding Stompie's murder, we felt that we should call people associated with the liberation movement, not excluding Winnie," Truth body investigations chief Dumisa Ntsebeza told the newspaper.

The mother of Sono — one of Madikizela-Mandela's alleged victims — testified to a Truth body panel recently that the ex-wife of Mandela was present when she last saw her son, according to *City Press*.

Richardson, who spoke to *City Press* from his prison cell, told the newspaper he felt "betrayed" by Madikizela-Mandela:

"I now feel betrayed because since I was jailed, Mrs. Mandela (sic) paid me a visit only once — in 1994," Richardson told the newspaper. "Even if I am killed for telling the truth, I'll rest in peace."

Richardson said he had told the following senior ANC activists about circumstances surrounding Seipei's death, according to city press:

- ✓ Former South African Council of Churches head Frank Chikane, who is now the chief aide of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki;
- ✓ Nthato Motlana, Mandela's former doctor, who now heads a large black business consortium;
- ✓ And Beyers Naude, a prominent anti-apartheid activist and former Dutch Reformed Church leader.

For her part, Madikizela-Mandela is no stranger to controversy — in 1994, she was fired from her position as deputy minister of arts, sciences and culture for defying Mandela's orders as president.

Last month, Winnie was re-elected as head of the ANC Women's League, although she was challenged by several senior female ANC members supported by the party's leadership.

Madikizela-Mandela was divorced from the 78-year-old Mandela last year after several years of legal separation; she is now reportedly "cash-strapped ... (and) has been in serious financial trouble in recent years," according to Johannesburg's weekly *Mail and Guardian*.

Earlier this month, she opened a curio shop outside her mansion in Soweto and began selling bottles of soil from the garden of another house she once shared with Mandela. (AFP)

Drugs Dealer Slips Through Greek Judiciary Net

ATHENS — A major drugs dealer arrested in 1981 managed to avoid serving the bulk of his prison term after a judge forgot to sign a decree left lying in a drawer, the press said Sunday, quoting a Supreme Court report.

The court report stopped short of accusing the judge of corruption, but urged disciplinary proceedings against him and called into question the entire process surrounding the drug dealer's case.

According to the report — which was ordered following press allegations of corruption — the dealer, arrested in 1981 for possession of 2.2 kilograms (4.8 pounds) of heroin and 28 kilograms (62 pounds) of ecstasy, and sentenced to 16 years in jail, served a total of only two years.

Held for one year in preventive detention from 1981-1982, the trafficker was given a conditional release pending his trial, which finally took place in 1995 after his lawyers obtained 14 adjournments for various reasons.

In 1995, he was sentenced to 16 years in prison but was released one year later when the time limit for his sentencing decree expired, after the judge over the course of nine months "forgot" to sign it.

Greek media regularly criticize the country's legal system for bureaucratic sluggishness and corruption, especially regarding the release of drug dealers.

Press reports have also said that there are tens of thousands of cases languishing in the courts, many of which have been there for over a decade. (AP)

FBI: Mechanical Failure Likely Caused TWA Crash

WASHINGTON — The FBI said on Sunday that mechanical failure likely brought down TWA flight 800 last July, killing all 230 people aboard.

"I think that the evidence as we've developed it to date ... would lead the inquiry toward the conclusion that this was a catastrophic mechanical failure," said FBI director Louis Freeh on the NBC television broadcast "Meet the Press."

Freeh added, however, that neither the Federal Bureau of Investigation nor the National Transportation Safety Board, the lead investigating agency, had reached a formal conclusion on the midair explosion.

"But the evidence is certainly not moving in the direction of a terrorist attack," he said. "It is in fact moving in the other direction."

Freeh said the FBI hoped to make its formal conclusions by "mid to late summer" in conjunction with the safety board.

The Paris-bound Boeing 747, operated by Trans World Airlines Inc., exploded shortly after takeoff from New York's Kennedy Airport on July 17, 1996.

James Kallstrom, the head of the FBI in New York, also said in two separate media interviews that two other theories — that a bomb or a missile blew up the plane — appeared less likely.

Kallstrom made his remarks on NBC's "News Forum" and separately in an interview with the *New York Times* in its Sunday edition.

"I believe it is less likely at this point that it was a bomb or a missile or criminal act but we can't say for sure," Kallstrom said, adding that the agency hopes to come to a conclusion as to the cause of the crash in 60 to 90 days.

"We have looked at every hole, every rip, and we see no evidence of high explosive. We see no evidence of a piece of shrapnel from a missile or a warhead going through the plane," he added.

After exploding, the plane plunged into the Atlantic Ocean off of Long Island, New York.

With more than 95 percent of the jet recovered from the ocean, Kallstrom said that investigators have just finished the mock-up of the jet in the hanger at Calverton, Long Island, where 92 feet (28 meters) of the middle of the 747 has been put back together.

"We are looking at all those penetrations again for the fourth or fifth time," he said. "We are looking at them in relationship to each other. I hope that at the end of this process, 60, 90 days from now, we will be able to say definitively what it was or what it wasn't."

Kallstrom stressed the importance of the public having "faith and trust" in accepting the conclusions reached by investigators.

He said that every effort was being made be made "to explain every hole in the plane and light in the sky. "I want to leave no stone unturned, look at every possible way we can look at it and then reach a conclusion."

Several witnesses reported seeing streaks or flashes of light around the jumbo jet just before the explosion, which fuelled theories of a missile attack.

An investigator who spoke on condition of anonymity told the *Times* that agents believe that the flashes of light were part of the explosion of the plane, even though the witnesses said the lights appeared before the explosion. (Reuter)

Solar Temple Tragedies Could Occur in Belgium

BRUSSELS — A member of the Belgian Commission investigating sects said Sunday that the presence in Belgium of members of the order of the Solar Temple raised fears that tragedies similar to the mass suicides in Canada, France and Switzerland could occur here.

"A movement still exists which means the same event could happen again," said Antoine Duquesne in an interview for the Belgian television station RTV-TVI.

The commission's inquiry into sects, published last week, cites Denis Guillaume, a close friend of one of the sect's founders Luc Jouret.

"He shows an unconditional devotion to Luc Jouret ... in his manuscript entitled 'Luc Jouret Still Alive' in which he claims the guru asked him to continue his work and carry the torch," said the report.

"Denis Guillaume considers himself a modern-day knight. He is subject to risk or is a potential catalyst," continued the report.

Interviewed by RTV-TVI, Guillaume, who lives in southern Belgium, denies the claims.

"I wrote a small novel made up of totally fictive elements. I am not a member of the order of the Solar Temple and have no intention of carrying a torch for anything," he said.

"The commission wanted to find something, on the order of the Solar Temple in particular. In fact they found nothing but a sad man — me," added the former soldier who did his military service with Jouret.

The commission's report echoes the warnings of a French lawyer who, in March, said that about 50 people close to the sect are in danger in France and may try to commit suicide at any time.

A total of 74 members of the cult are known to have died in Canada, France and Switzerland since 1994, with the latest incident occurring in March this year when five people perished in a rural house in Quebec. (AFP)

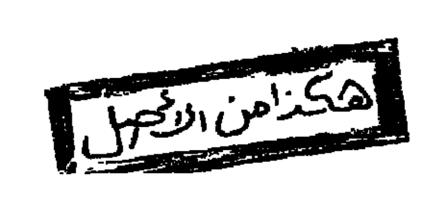
Urdangarin Gets Engaged to Princess Cristina

MADRID — Spanish sports star Inaki Urdangarin got engaged to the second daughter of King Juan Carlos of Spain on Saturday in a special ceremony at the Zarzuela Palace in Madrid.

Princess Cristina and Urdangarin, star of the Spanish handball team, posed for the cameras in the garden of the palace after exchanging gifts as part of their engagement.

"We are enchanted," Queen Sofia told reporters afterwards.

The princess, 31, whose full name is Cristina Federica Victoria Antonia of Bourbon and Greece, met Inaki, 29, star of the Spanish handball team, at the Atlanta Olympic Games last year, where the team won a bronze medal. (AFP)





WHO: Cancer Cases to Double in 25 Years

GENEVA — Cancer cases are expected to at least double globally during the next 25 years, with the most worrying trend the number of women developing lung and breast cancer, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced.

Circulatory diseases, including heart attacks and strokes, will also continue to rise, especially as people in developing countries adopt unhealthy habits such as smoking and sedentary lifestyles, it added.

"Dramatic increases in life expectancy, combined with profound changes in lifestyles, will lead to global epidemics of cancer and other chronic diseases in the next two decades," the UN agency said in its annual report based on 1996 data reported by its 191 member states.

"The number of cancer cases is expected to at least double in most countries during the next 25 years," it added.

Yet "the world health report 1997: conquering suffering, enriching humanity" said millions of premature deaths and disabilities were largely preventable. WHO called for a campaign to encourage healthy lifestyles and improve disease detection.

The report's focus is non-infectious diseases — cancer, circulatory diseases, mental disorders including alzheimer's, respiratory conditions, diabetes and disabling diseases including arthritis.

Such chronic diseases kill more than 24 million a year, or almost half total deaths worldwide. Most of the balance are caused by infectious diseases which claim 17.3 million lives.

Coronary heart disease is the leading killer disease, causing 7.2 million deaths a year. The world's highest rates are now found in Eastern and Central Europe, according to WHO.

Cancers which kill 6.3 million and cerebrovascular diseases including strokes, which account for 4.6 million deaths, follow.

The top cancer killers worldwide, accounting for 60 percent of all cancer cases and deaths, are those of the lung, stomach, breast, colon-rectum, mouth, liver, cervix and oesophagus.

"The most ominous trends are in lung cancer and breast cancer...as tobacco consumption is increasing in many developing countries, the lung cancer epidemic seems certain to continue and grow.

"Lung cancer is not only the biggest killer and the most common of cancers — almost a million deaths a year and over 1.3 million cases — it is also preventable," WHO said. Lung cancer is the most common cause of death from cancer in American women.

"There will be a 33 percent rise in lung cancers in women and a 40 percent increase in prostate cancers in men in European Union countries alone by 2005," it added.

Globally, 85 percent of lung cancer cases in men and 46 percent in women are due to smoking, according to WHO. Smoking accounts for one in seven of all cancer cases worldwide.

Two thirds of stomach cancer cases are in developing countries, with a drop elsewhere during the last 30 years attributed to better nutrition. China accounts for 55 percent of all liver cancer, also a major problem in poor countries.

Breast cancer is on the rise in most parts of the world, particularly in regions which previuosly had low rates, WHO said.

"Studies show that the incidence in women who migrate from low to high-risk regions slowly rises over two or three generations to the rates of the host country," it said.

This illustrated the importance of lifestyle as well as hormonal risk factors in developing breast cancer, it added. At least half of breast cancer victims survive at least five years after diagnosis.

Chronic diseases can stem from a genetic predisposition, but lifestyle factors increase the risks — including smoking, heavy alcohol consumption, poor diet and inadequate physical activity.

Prevention of high blood pressure is vital in avoiding deaths from coronary heart disease, while high blood cholesterol levels are usually related to a diet rich in animal fats.

"Hypertension is considered both as a disease category and as one of the major risk factors for heart disease, stroke and kidney disease," it said. "The major risk factors are overweight, poor dietary habits, particularly excessive intake of salt and alcohol, and inadequate physical activity.

"Lack of physical activity is the most prevalent modifiable risk factor in many industrialized countries," it added.

(Reuter)

THOUGHT

IN music one must think with the heart and feel with the brain.

George Szell
Hungarian-American conductor

PRAYER

Noon............................13:01
Evening..........................20:16
Dawn (tomorrow).............04:21
Sunrise (tomorrow)...........06:07

TODAY IN HISTORY

1941 - Joseph Stalin becomes Soviet premier, succeeding V.M. Molotov.

1942 - U.S.-Filipino forces on island of Corregidor in Manila Bay surrender to Japanese in World War II.

1964 - South Africa passes Bantu laws amendment bill.

1976 - Earthquake strikes northeastern Italy, about 900 bodies are recovered and 400 people are reported missing.

1978 - UN Security council condemns South Africa for invading Angola and demands withdrawal.

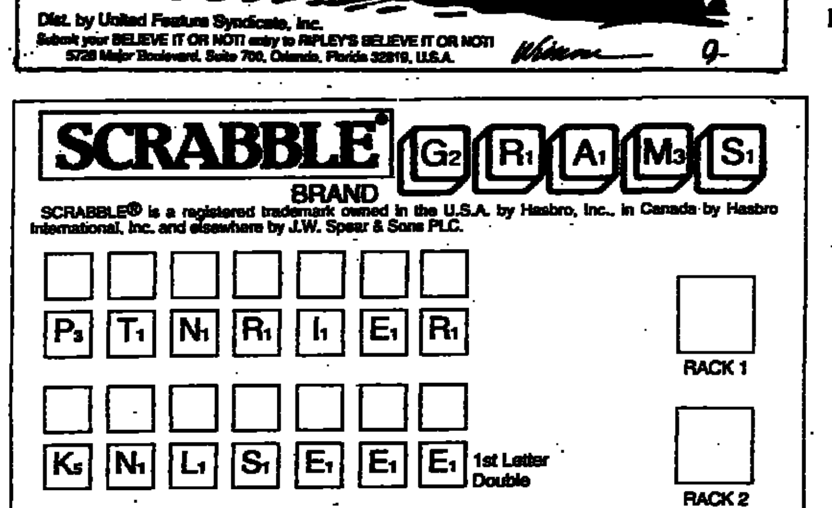
1989 - Chinese students send new appeal to government and Communist Party for dialogue on their demands for democracy and an end to corruption.

1990 - Bomb explodes on passenger train near Pakistan's border with India, killing 12 and injuring 41.

1991 - Yugoslav army goes on combat alert after Croatian protesters attack soldiers in port city of Split.

1993 - Space shuttle Columbia and its seven-man crew take a detour and land in the California desert after a 10-day German laboratory research mission.

1994 - Queen Elizabeth II and President Francois Mitterand open the Channel tunnel.



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P3	T1	N1	R1	I1	E1	R1		RACK 1
K5	N1	L1	S1	E1	E1	E1	1st Letter Double	RACK 2
W4	L1	S1	T1	L1	O1	E1	3rd Letter Triple	RACK 3
N1	I1	O1	T1	P3	G2	T1		RACK 4

PAR SCORE 125-135

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

4-25-95

SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

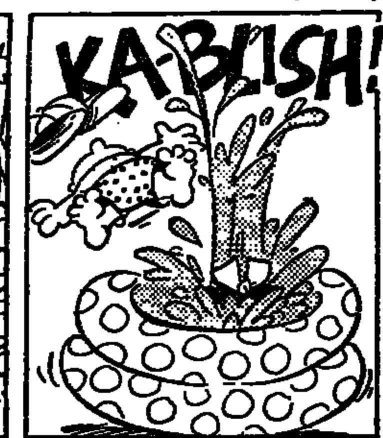
J8	I1	N1	X8				RACK 1 =	54
M3	I1	S1	F4	I1	R1	E1	RACK 2 =	66
P3	A1	R1	C3	H4	E1	D2	RACK 3 =	65
W4	I1	N1	C3	H4			RACK 4 =	13

PAR SCORE 125-135 JUDD'S TOTAL 198

4-24-95















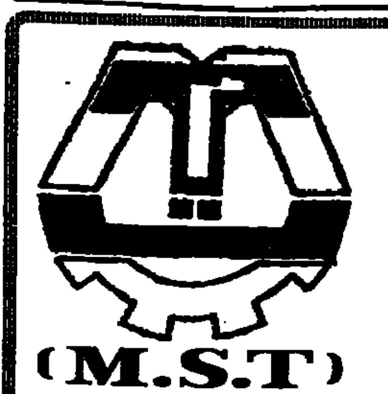












(M.S.T)

[illegible] Sazi Tabriz Approved by [illegible] for the Third Time



An interview with Engineer Badamchi, managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz Co.

The plan of establishment of Machine Sazi Tabriz Factory in the agreement of technical and economic cooperation between the governments of Iran and Czech was implemented in 1967 and five years later, 1972, it became operational.

It had been considered in the first plan to manufacture different kinds of water pumps, compressors and electromotors as well as diesel engines. But later, the production of each of the above-mentioned products due to increasing of activities was handed over to a company and Machine Sazi Tabriz continued its activities just by producing different types of machine tools.

These days, the machine tool industry has been faced great and considerable changes and developments throughout the world and the manual machines in many of the developed industrial countries have been replaced with modern machines.

Machine Sazi Tabriz also in tandem with the modern machine tool industry of the world has taken necessary steps toward changing the manual machines into NC and CNC

Machine-Making Industry in Iran and the World

The technological capability and the superb products of Machine Sazi Tabriz has enabled this industrial unit not only to offer unique products inside the country but also to inject its products into international markets which can compete from viewpoints of quality and quantity with the similar goods of some states such as China, Taiwan, Slovakia and Russia.

At present, the countries of Japan, Germany, Italy and the United States among the developed states and South Korea, China, India, Argentine, Brazil and Taiwan among the developing countries are the record-holders of the most amount of manufacturing high-quality machine tools in the world but on the whole Taiwan enjoys the highest rate of the sale in the international market.

Machine Sazi Tabriz as the most giant machine tool manufacturing industrial unit of the country and the most active company in the field of exporting the aforesaid products to the international market, has recently succeeded to receive the international Certificate of ISO 9001. On this occasion, Engineer Badamchi, the managing directorof the company took part in an interview and elaborated on its activities as follows:

ISO, Complementing Standards

According to managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz: "Machine Sazi Tabriz from the very beginning has manufactured all of its products according to the standards of Germany and former Czechoslovakia and it succeeded to obtain the Certificate of ISO 9001 from one of the biggest credit bodies in Azar 1375 and in this way the culture of 'ISO' was also considered in all stages of manufacturing, i.e. designing, manufacturing, installation, running and after-sales services.

How Was ISO Certificate Obtained?

Engineer Badamchi during his explanations referred to the background and trend of receiving international Certificate of ISO 9001 and said, "The thought of receiving ISO 9001 Certificate for Machine Sazi Tabriz was strengthened one year ago and then the necessary studies and trainings were made for the personnel to get familiar with the culture of ISO and also some briefing and training courses in the fields of documentation and domestic auditing were arranged that all the workers took part in. A year later, the condition of the company and its rate of conformity with the ISO standards were surveyed and evaluated and after that we started revising the executive methods which in this regard all the workers and staff participated in the training courses as follows:

- Documentation training course with 144 people per hour
- Auditing training course with 176 people per hour
- Instructor-training BA course with 2,880 people per hour
- Personnel general training course with 12,888 people per hour

In this regard, the Guiding Committee consisted of intermediate managers and under the supervision of one of them started revising the documents, surveying and final approving and then sending to the different sections.



[illegible] Machine Sazi Tabriz Group

Training and Research Center of Machine Sazi Tabriz

Engineer Badamchi explains, "Machine Sazi Tabriz enjoys one of the most equipped and valid specialized training centers at associate of arts (AA) as well as bachelor of arts (BA) levels and performs its programs in five sections and three courses.

1- Mechanic engineering BA course

2- Electronics, machine tool and repairs AA course

3- Short-term intensive courses in the fields of computer, principles of management, etc. which are run if the manufacturing and headquarters centers require

4- One-year technical laborer-training course

5- Short-term and medium-term statistics, pneumatics, programing, language, etc.

Meanwhile, the Training Center of Machine Sazi Tabriz considered some programs for increasing the skills of workers and staff which were materialized in the form of one-year training, 294,000 people per hour and 181 subjects since last Bahman (concurrent with the Ten-Day Dawn).

Manufacturing Turnout for the First Time

He added, "When researching on the equipment required for the Islamic Republic of Iran Railway, we found out that the mentioned organization spent a large amount of money to import its needed different sorts of turnouts. After surveying the issue, we concluded that the above-mentioned product can be manufactured inside the country and as the first steps, we negotiated with the French company under the supervision of the two countries' political representatives. The outcome of our negotiations with the aforesaid company was that the technical knowledge on designing and manufacturing different kinds of turnouts would be freely offered to us just in lieu of selling some pieces and items which are not manufactured in Iran now. Receiving the license for making a contract from Economic Council as well as allocation of foreign currency equivalent with 52 million dollars, a contract between Machine Sazi Tabriz and Ministry of Roads and Transportation was signed on manufacturing some 900 turnouts needed by the Islamic Republic of Iran Railway.

At present the contract's pro forma has been handed over Bank Tejarat and the production line and also assembly line will be put into operation after 3 months in case of open credit.

Manufacturing Lathing Machine CNC - TN50

To reach self-sufficiency and manufacture the lathing machines, Machine Sazi Tabriz Group through cooperation of Contronic Company and installing control system and other equipment has succeeded to change the lathing machine into special lathe and mass produce. The managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz says, "The control system enables the operator to do all machining operations easily (in particular regarding mass production of complicated and precise parts).

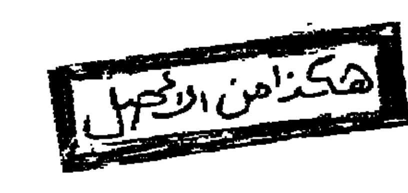
Different operations can be carried out according to the revised program through applying this system. This machine from viewpoint of saving foreign currency can be a good substitute for the expensive machines for precise consumption in lathing.

Manufacturing Lathing Machine CNC - TM50

The lathing machine which has been recently manufactured in Machine Sazi Tabriz enjoys flat base and has the capability to machine the heavy parts having 50 centimeters diameter and about 75 centimeters length.

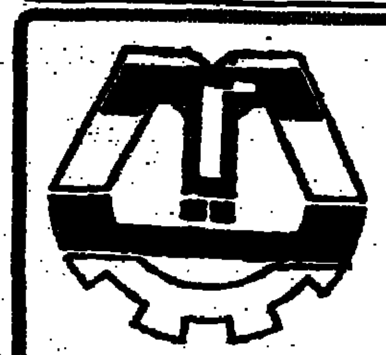
Engineer Badamchi referring to the characteristics and advantages of this machine said, "This machine is equipped with control systems, frequency convertor and Siemens AC motors of Germany and the most precise balscrews of Japan has the capability to be used as reliable and proper machine tool for mass production of precise and sensitive parts. The advantages of this lathing machine are as follows:

- Spindle equipment of Germany's Siemens motor and electrical gearbox ZF
- Spindle remote control by control system
- Proper security lid for danger of removal of pieces and filings
- Central lubrication system for lubricating the main axle and bal-screws
- Concrete base increasing body's anti-vibration features and strengthening machine's body.



هكذا من الأصل

Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz at the Service of Leading Industrial Units of the Country



Machine Sazi Tabriz Group, affiliated to the Organization for Development and Renovation of Iranian Industries was designed and founded in 1967 with the cooperation and supports of Skoda Export of (former) Czechoslovakia.

The objective behind establishing this giant industrial group, which today is one of the prides of our Islamic country, was to manufacture various machine tools as lathing machinery, drills, pumps, press, compressor, diesel engines, electromotors, and the like.

* One of the most important sections of Machine Sazi Tabriz Factories is moulding unit. 40,000 sq.m out of 54 hectares total land area of the factories, is allocated to molding workshops.
* The capacity for work and production is so high in the molding workshops of Machine Sazi Tabriz Group. These workshops manufacture semi-fabricated products for Machine Sazi Tabriz, including: cast iron pieces (up to three tons), molding color metals (aluminum and copper alloys), ironworks on steel pieces used for manufacturing machine tools. The high capacity of molding workshops enables the company to manufacture pieces for customers from

> *The objective behind establishing this giant industrial group, which today is one of the prides of our Islamic country, was to manufacture various machine tools as lathing machinery, drills, pumps, press, compressor, diesel engines, electromotors, and the like.*

outside the company. With the expansion of the productive activities of these workshops and the ever-increasing demand from outside customers, it was decided that from the beginning of 1996, the molding workshops and its affiliated sections — with 800 personnel — be recognized as an independent company. And now the Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz has been registered as an independent firm which is directly responsible for meeting the requirements and producer of Machine Sazi Tabriz orders and other factories of the country.

* The orders received by the Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz are mainly in the form of technical designs. These orders are designed in the Technical Affairs Section of the company according to the requirements of the known international standards. Also the technology of manufacturing each piece is determined in the same section. Then, the orders are sent to the equipped workshops of model-making. In these workshops everything is prepared for manufacturing casts, wooden, resin and steel boxes, where the experienced and trained staff prepare the models and casts for molding or ironworks of the orders.
* Molding is achieved by melting facilities (including three 8-ton inductive furnaces, and a 40-ton supporting furnace).

Casting is done using full-automatic, semi-automatic molding machines or simply by manual methods (depending on the piece). In all stages of production process, the experienced staff make use of the facilities and services of the equipped laboratories. Also the quality control staff supervise the products during the whole production process.

Following pelletizing, grinding, and the final control, the molded pieces are sent to warehouses.

* At present, Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz produces various cast pieces of iron cast, lathing machineries, drill, etc. for the orders received from Machine Sazi Tabriz. Also the company molds various pieces of pumps, industrial compressors, vehicles, tractors, refrigerator compressors, railway break shoe, traverse shoulders and various types of joints.
* Appreciating cooperations and supports of our customers, we introduce some of them here:

1- Machine Sazi Tabriz Group: All types of iron cast (gray and infrangible) and forge pieces of lathing machines, milling machines, drill, grinding machine, tool sharpeners, etc..(almost 500 types of molding and ironwork pieces).

2- Iranian National Railway: All types of railway break shoe

3- Concrete Traverse Company: Shoulders (malleable iron cast)

4- Pump Iran Company: All types of water pumps

5- Idem: Various pieces of diesel engines

6- Tabriz Compressor-Making Company: Various pieces compressors for this factory (gray iron cast)

7- Tractor Sazi Iran: Various types of pieces for tractor engines (gray iron cast and ductile)

8- Bonyan Diesel: Molding iron cast pieces for the engines of this company (gray iron cast)

9- Bonyan Machine: Molding pieces for under pressure irrigation systems

10- Iranian Compressor-Making Company: Molding various pieces for refrigerator and freezer compressors

11- SAPAM: Front wheel disk, hub of Paykan (ductile and gray cast iron)

12- Samied: Paykan gearbox pieces (ductile and cast iron)

13- Iran Front Parts Pieces (Lahijan): Paykan disk, hub, break drum (ductile and gray cast iron)

14- Parse Arin: Various pieces of betoneers and other products of this company (gray iron cast)

15- Iran Schindler: Various parts of elevators (gray iron cast)

16- Machine Ajza: Vehicle parts (ductile)

17- Schaed Iran: Various vehicle parts

18- Iran Varz: Various parts of harvest machinery and agricultural instruments (malleable and gray iron cast)

19- Mahya Gaz: Iron cast parts for fireplaces (gray cast iron)

20- Behpaak: Iron cast pieces for lubrication machinery (gray iron cast)

21- Wagon Pars: Break shoe (gray-iron cast)

As far as chemical analysis, microscopic structure and mechanical characteristics are concerned, all pieces are quality controlled to be according to the requirements of the international standards, and the customers as well.

The Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz, in line with further promotion of the quality of its products, has spared no efforts to achieve the goal.

Export Activities

The Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz recently has expanded its activities to out of Iranian borders and accepts orders from foreign countries including:

— Molding pieces for Turkey

> *The Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz recently has expanded its activities to out of Iranian borders and accepts orders from foreign countries.*

— Right now we are busy model-making for compressor parts for Italian factories.

— At present, also, the expert staff of this company are busy establishing a giant molding workshop in Libya, which was left unfinished by European experts. The Iranian experts are responsible for the production and maintenance of the workshop.

Research and Cooperation with Universities

Due to the importance of research and study in meeting the objectives of development, the Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz has taken 'technical and scientific cooperation with the universities' as one of its cornerstones. To double the technical might of the company, investment in renovation of the workshops, and preparing proper fields for the relation of industry and university, we have concluded contracts with Tabriz and Elam-o-San'at (Science and Technology) universities to launch joint research projects, to the extent of the capability of the company. This joint cooperation is both in favor of the industry and it provides financial facilities for the promotion of technical-scientific researches in Iranian universities.

Renovation and Coming Horizons

The Molding Company of Machine Sazi Tabriz believes in the future of the Iranian molding industry. It tries to bring into conformity its facilities with future requirements of the country. In this line renovation of the factory's equipment and removing the obstacles are on the agenda of the company.

To meet its objectives in the field of renovation in future, the company has many projects under hand, including turning the couple furnaces into gas fuel ones, co2 production line which is used in the factory, renovation of different parts of casting workshops, melting furnace, and thermo operational section.

It goes without saying that accomplishment of the above-said project requires huge amounts of investments. It is hoped that the responsible authorities of the country pave the way for the renovation of this industry.

[illegible]

During the last year, Machine Sazi Tabriz gained much success in export field. Before the winter of the current year, the company has exported pieces worth $2.439.000 to Turkey, said the managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz, adding:

The statistics reveal Machine Sazi Tabriz in the year 1991 has exported 91 lathing machines at $831,000 and for the export of engineering services to Libya the company has earned some 938,000 marks.

According to Engineer Badamchi, Machine Sazi Tabriz enjoys a prudent management. This is why the company has programs under hand which lead to greatest share of international markets such as:

* The plan for manufacturing railway switch point

> *With the expansion of the productive activities of these workshops and the ever-increasing demand from outside customers, it was decided that from the beginning of 1996, the molding workshops and its affiliated sections — with 800 personnel — be recognized as an independent company.*

* The reconstruction and renovation plan and reviewing the production structure for productivity.
* Designing and manufacturing machine tools
* Designing management information network

Quantity, Superiority and Export

As it was mentioned earlier, Machine Sazi Tabriz, paying attention to the requirements of international standards has gained superiority in the competition of similar Turkish, Chinese, Indian, and Taiwanese products.

Engineer Badamchi adds: Today, countries like Turkey who possess machine tools manufacturing factories, are suitable markets for Machine Sazi Tabriz products. It is expected that, attaining the international standards, the demand for this company's products be increased in future.

Machine Sazi Tabriz in Tripoli

According to the managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz, in 1994 a contract was concluded between this company and an Arab company namely Libyan Engineering Industries on putting into operation the molding lines of the Libyan company by the experts of Machine Sazi Tabriz. The contract has been materialized up to 80 percent, for the rest of which the experts of company travel to Tripoli every three months.

In his recent visit to Libya, the Iranian minister of industries, while visiting the activities of the company there and expressing his satisfaction of the contract, signed a long-term bilateral industrial cooperation with his Libyan counterpart. It was decided that full optimization of the molding lines along with training Libyan technical staff by the Iranian experts be the first step of the new contract.

[illegible]

Quality promotion and variety of production, stands a high stand in Machine Sazi Tabriz. This is why to accelerate the activities on research and development, new units have been created in the company whose most important task is to promote the quality of the products and give variety to its productions.

The managing director of Machine Sazi Tabriz adds: This unit has so far been successful in many fields including: optimization of production methods, promotion of the capabilities of the machine tools using state-of-the-art technology, and inauguration of the new production lines for the companies and ministries.

Cancer, Heart Disease Cases Set to Explode Globally

GENEVA — Chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease, leading killers in rich countries, will strike hundreds of millions of people in developing nations in an unfolding global epidemic, warns a World Health Organization report issued here Monday.

"The outlook is a crisis of suffering on a global scale," WHO director-general Hiroshi Nakajima said.

Some 24 million people die each year from chronic conditions, nearly half of the global total of deaths from all causes.

Circulatory diseases such as heart attacks kill 15.3 million people a year, cancer in all its forms 6.3 million people.

The WHO's 1997 world health report warns that cancer cases will double in developing countries, and jump by 40 percent in richer ones with about 15 million people expected to develop cancer by 2020, compared with about 10 people a year presently.

Although life expectancy has dramatically improved this century — to an average of 65 years in 1966 — increased longevity is a mixed blessing, and sometimes even a curse, as older people are typically more prone to diabetes, cancers and other chronic ailments.

Third World citizens, who have traditionally been more at risk from infectious diseases, are increasingly vulnerable to chronic diseases as well, creating what the who calls a "double burden" of suffering.

"Already, the outlook for most individuals in the developing world is that if they do manage to survive the killer infections of infancy, childhood and maturity, they will become exposed in later life to noncommunicable diseases," the report says.

One key reason is that "people in poorer countries are now acquiring many of the unhealthy lifestyles and behaviors of the industrialized world: sedentary occupations, inadequate physical activity, unsatisfactory diets, tobacco, alcohol and drugs," the study says.

While infectious and parasitic diseases claim more than 17 million lives in developing countries — representing 43 percent of all deaths in such nations — a quarter of fatalities today can be attributed to heart attacks, strokes and other circulatory diseases.

Cancer is the third biggest killer in the developing world, claiming almost four million lives a year, the study says.

Eighty-eight percent of cervical cancer cases are in developing countries as are two-thirds of all new cases of stomach cancer and 85 percent of all cases of oesophageal cancer.

Liver cancer is a major problem in developing countries, with China alone accounting for 55 percent of all cases.

Worldwide, the most ominous trends are in breast and lung cancer, which kill almost a million people a year.

As tobacco consumption is increasing in many developing countries, the lung cancer epidemic seems certain to grow, according to the report.

"Countries, particularly in the developing world, can no longer afford to deal with the two challenges of infectious and chronic diseases sequentially, as in the past," Nakajima said, adding: "They must address them simultaneously and the international community must help them to do."

Developed countries, for their part, cannot ignore the dangers of infectious diseases, he said.

"In the battle for the health in the 21st century, infectious diseases and chronic diseases are twin enemies that have to be fought simultaneously on a global scale," Nakajima said.

While infectious diseases can be cured, and eventually, like polio, stamped out, chronic diseases that hit individuals are far trickier to combat.

Developing countries can expect to bear the brunt of the diabetes epidemic in the coming quarter of a century when the WHO expects the number of people suffering from the disorder to reach 300 million compared with 135 million today.

Similarly, the scourge of mental disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, whose incidence rises steeply in people over 60, will make further inroads in Africa, Asia and Latin America where there could be more than 80 million victims by 2025, the report says.

With such an enormity of health problems waiting to happen, the report calls for urgent action with priorities that include:

- ✓ The adoption of comprehensive chronic disease control packages tackling prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation;
- ✓ A global campaign to encourage healthy lifestyles, stressing diet, exercise and avoidance of smoking;
- ✓ Quicker research into new drugs and vaccines; and
- ✓ Alleviation of pain for those who cannot be cured. *(AFP)*

Facts on Mental Disorders, Job-Related Accidents, Suicide

GENEVA — Pertinent facts concerning mental disorders, occupational health accidents and suicides listed by the World Health Organization are as follows:

- ✓ More than 40 million people suffer from different types of epilepsy, which is characterized by seizures with or without loss of consciousness.
- ✓ An estimated 29 million people suffer from dementia, which caused 200,000 deaths in 1996. Incurable Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia.

The condition also occurs in other brain diseases such as Parkinson's disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and AIDS.

- ✓ An estimated 45 million people are affected by schizophrenia, with 4.5 million new cases recorded last year. Schizophrenia, a disorder affecting mostly people around the age of 20, is characterized by distorted thinking, perception and judgment.
- ✓ The use of alcohol, illicit drugs and other psychoactive substances causes at least 123,000 deaths annually.
- ✓ Occupational accidents in the workplace account for more than 120 million injuries and at least 220,000 deaths a year.
- ✓ There are an estimated 160 million cases a year of work-place-related diseases, stemming from factors such as chemicals and biological agents in the air and noise, which can produce hearing loss.
- ✓ Just five to 10 percent of workers in developing countries, and 20 to 50 percent in industrialized countries have access to adequate occupational health services.
- ✓ Suicide leads to more than 800,000 deaths a year. Experts believe that many deaths attributed to accidents are in reality disguised suicides. Men are more likely to fake their own lives and the incidence increases with age. The highest risk group is men over 65 who live alone.

(AFP)

Global Causes of Death in Developed, Developing World

GENEVA — Global causes of death last year in the developed and developing world expressed in percentage terms according to the World Health Organization are as follows (deaths are expressed in brackets):

	Developed World	Developing World
Circulatory system diseases	45.6 percent (5.52 million)	24.5 percent (9.8 million)
Cancers	21.0 (2.54 million)	9.5 (3.8 million)
Respiratory system diseases	8.1 (979,000)	4.8 (1.9 million)
Infectious and parasitic diseases	1.2 (151,000)	43.0 (17.16 million)
Prenatal and neonatal deaths (foetuses and infants)	1.0 (119,000)	9.1 (3.62 million)
Pregnancy-related deaths (mothers)	0 (3,000)	1.5 (582,000)
Other and unknown causes	23.1 (2.8 million)	7.7 (3.06 million)

(AFP)

British Colony Vows to Wait Out Caribbean Volcano

OLD TOWNE, Montserrat — So far, it's a lopsided tug-of-war over land on this tiny Caribbean island. The volcano is mighty, but the people haven't totally lost their grip.

Thousands have abandoned the island, but others in this far-flung remnant of the British empire are talking of relocating the capital and the airport and establishing another harbor in a new offensive against the Soufriere Hills volcano.

Thousands have abandoned the island, but others in this far-flung remnant of the British empire are talking of relocating the capital and the airport and establishing another harbor in a new offensive against the Soufriere Hills volcano.

"Someday we expect to leave this world (of hardship) and go back home," said Elizabeth Gerald, 82, a shelter resident who was chased from her plot of land more than a year ago by the volcano.

Britain hastily prepared a plan to evacuate this Caribbean colony when the 3,000-foot (915 meters) volcano first erupted in July 1995. But critics say it has dragged its feet in finding homes for the 4,500 people displaced since then.

Only now — after scientists concluded the volcano could be active for years — are officials moving to settle permanently a sparsely populated "safe" zone in the north.

The wish list to move the evacuated capital, Plymouth, includes 500 homes, a new pier, water and sewer services, a hospital, roads, government offices, industrial parks and schools. The cost: hundreds of millions of dollars.

That's a lot for an island smaller than Washington, D.C. just 7,000 people live here — down from 12,000 before the volcano spurted to life — most of them descendants of African slaves.

Montserrat has become Britain's biggest per-capita foreign aid recipient.

"The British government will maintain its commitment to Montserrat as long as Montserratians want to stay here," said the appointed British Governor, Frank Savage. "The infrastructure program will go ahead."

None too soon for nearly 800 people who have slept on cots in hot, crowded shelters and churches since an April 3, 1996, ash eruption forced authorities to evacuate the southern third of Montserrat.

The better shelters resemble wooden barracks. In others, sheets hung from ceilings provide a veneer of privacy.

Four thousand people receive food donations and vouchers of $44 a month for adults and $22 for children.

"Nobody in Montserrat goes hungry. They are fed, clothed, looked after," Savage said.

Still, despair afflicts the elderly farmers, many of them fiercely independent, who lived off the volcano's once- verdant slopes and expected to die there.

A few still tend to the cattle, goats and sheep left behind.

"Every day I go to check on my animals. But my pocket has a hole in it. I don't have money. And I can't get a sale for my animals. All the butchers have left the island," said Michael Edmeade, 73.

Dozens of businesses have closed. Tourists, who once provided 30 percent of income, have all but disappeared.

But moving north is a challenge. It is rocky, hilly and lacks drainage for sewers. Montserrat's government owns just 2 percent of the land and buying more is difficult. One parcel destined for housing had 17 co-owners living in 14 countries. Other absentee landowners refuse to sell or lease.

"Every day I go to check on my animals. But my pocket has a hole in it. I don't have money. And I can't get a sale for my animals. All the butchers have left the island."

Hoping to speed the process, Britain's Overseas Development Administration has established an office to process aid requests. More than $55 million has been spent or is in the pipeline.

"What you're faced with here is reconstructing an entire country, albeit a small one," said the Oda's Frank Black. "We wouldn't be putting in money like we are if we didn't think it was sustainable."

Officials have spent more than $460,000 to clear volcanic ash and mud from a river that runs through empty Plymouth — in case the volcano calms down and people can return. Left alone, it would overflow and cause extensive damage.

Plans are under way to set up Montserrat as another tax-free haven in the Caribbean with off-shore banking. It's hoped that construction will generate jobs and entice some migrants back home.

That optimism may defy the volcano's hidden logic. But it keeps many residents going.

"For me, I feel that with every shovelful of ash I throw off the church roof, I'm beating the volcano," said the Rev. Larry Finnegan of San Martin de Porra Roman Catholic Church.

(AP)

Matsushita to Join Digital TV Project in Britain

TOKYO — Japan's Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. and three British companies will jointly launch a digital television broadcasting business in Britain, AFP quoted the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* Monday.

The Japanese consumer electronics giant and its British partners — BSkyB, British Telecommunications plc and Midland Bank — are soon to establish a joint venture for the project, the daily said.

The new venture is expected to be capitalized at 103 billion yen ($817 million), with Matsushita putting up 10 to 20 percent of the venture's capital, the daily said.

An official announcement of the project will be made later this week with the companies currently conducting final negotiations on the specifics of the venture, *Nihon Keizai* said.

Under the plan, the new venture is to sell set-top box adapters that enable a broad range of interactive services for home television viewers, including Internet access services, the paper said.

Matsushita will supply the set-top boxes and relevant equipment, the daily said.

Through the new project, Matsushita hopes to become a major producer of digital television devices for both satellite and terrestrial broadcasting, the paper said.

BSkyB, a pay-TV operator partially owned by the Australian media group Newscorp. Led by Rupert Murdoch, is expected to (Contd on Pg. 14)

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Annan Calls on All Parties to Zaire Talks to Work Toward Peace

UNITED NATIONS — UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on Sunday called on all parties in Zaire and all "interested states" to help ensure a "successful



completion" of peace talks there, a spokesman for Annan said.

"The secretary-general is gratified that President Mobutu (Sese Seko) and (rebel leader) Laurent Kabila have begun a dialogue on a peaceful transition of power in Zaire," the spokesman said.

"But the work of managing this process of change has just begun."

"The secretary-general calls on all the principal players in Zaire, as well as on all interested states, to continue to work together to assure a successful completion of the process leading to peace, democracy and prosperity in Zaire."

Annan also thanked South African President Nelson Mandela, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson, UN/Organization of African Unity envoy Mohamed Sahnoun and "the other heads of state" for their work in setting up the talks. (AFP)

Death Threats to Australian Anti-Immigration MP

PERTH, Australia — Controversial independent MP Pauline Hanson said here Monday she has received three death threats amid growing protests over her views on immigration and aborigines.

"The threats are from the radicals out there," the founder of the newly-formed one nation party said during an interview on a highly-rating commercial radio station, Perth 6PR.

"But I am not going to wrap myself in a cocoon — I have a job to do," she said.

Opponents have branded Hanson a racist because she wants a halt to all immigration to Australia and has urged a government overhaul of aid to aborigines.

Hanson was pelted with tomatoes, grapes and sticks hurled by protesters as she arrived for two functions attended by supporters here at the weekend.

Police reinforcements were called in after an estimated 500 angry demonstrators at the Sunday event, in the suburb of north Perth, threatened to get out of control.

Punches were exchanged and two demonstrators were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, police said.

Hanson said during the radio appearance she would not be deterred from the task she had set herself — "talking on issues that have previously been spoken only behind closed doors."

She said: "We have a problem out there in the community. Let's discuss it, let's debate it."

But she said: "I deplore racial intolerance. I am calling for equality for everyone. Is that racist?"

Hanson said a recent unofficial poll by her supporters in her seat of Oxley, in the state of Queensland, showed she had 64% support. (AFP)

Number of Children in Japan Declines for 16th Consecutive Year



TOKYO — Japan marks its annual children's day holiday Monday with the smallest number of children since its first national census in 1920 - a consequence of a steadily falling birth rate.

Continuing a decline for the 16th consecutive year, the number of children aged 14 or younger fell by 320,000 from a year earlier to 19.52 million as of April 1, the government's management and coordination agency reported Sunday.

Last year marked the first time since 1920 that the number has fallen below 20 million.

In a country notorious for costly and cramped housing and a demanding school system, many Japanese couples stop at one child to hold down expenses. This has led to worries about caring for an increasing number of elderly with a shrinking work force.

The agency said children aged 14 or younger now account for 15.5% of Japan's population, down 0.3 percentage points from a year earlier and the second lowest proportion among major countries. Only Italy, with 15.1, has a lower percentage.

The Japanese figure compares with 16.3% in Germany, 18.8% in Sweden, 19.4% in France, 19.4% in Britain, 20.7% in Canada, 22.0% in the United States, 22.6% in South Korea, 26.7% in China, 33.5% in Brazil, 35.0% in Indonesia and 35.2% in India, the agency said.

In Japan, children accounted for 33% to 37% of the population up to 1955. (AP)

Small Investors Take Vietnam Labor Rights Back to the 19th Century

HANOI — Cowboy firms making a quick buck from Vietnam's open door policy are forcing a litany of demeaning 19th Century practices on their workers, who are increasingly leaving in disgust, labor officials say.

Tu Le, a senior official with Vietnam's main trade union umbrella body, characterises the firms concerned as "small investors who don't want to operate in Vietnam forever". Small firms from South Korea — a country recently paralyzed by a wave of strikes to protest a controversial new labor law — are being singled out as the worst culprits. But Taiwanese and Hong Kong companies have also been criticized.

Le details a range of grievances, including pay cuts for minor "mistakes" like talking while working or failing to say hello to the boss. "Some workers may see their whole salary disappear for some very small fault," says Le, who heads the legal department at the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor.

Not so long ago a job in a foreign-invested joint venture was seen as a dream job by many Vietnamese. But now, fed up and stressed out with the working conditions, many are returning to jobs in the state sector where they are often paid just as much and treated better.

Some 15% of foreign companies in Ho Chi Minh city do not pay social security as required by Vietnamese law, Le says, and between 10% and 20% have no trade unions. They "intentionally do not understand" Vietnam's law on the minimum wage, Le says, which is set at $45 a month for foreign firms operating in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city and lower elsewhere.

In some factories, workers can go to the toilet only once during work hours.

Other criticisms include arrears in paying salaries, failure to allow workers the four days off a month they are legally entitled to, and making workers accept contracts to produce a given number of goods in an impossibly short period.

According to figures published by the Lao Dong Union newspaper, 73 strikes occurred in Vietnam in 1996, an increase of 22% in 1995. Most of the strikes were at foreign-invested firms.

Phan Duc Binh, deputy director of the Legal Department at the Ministry of Labour, says in general the employers have themselves to blame. "For most of the strikes the fault is on the employer's side."

Binh says the firms concerned do not follow Vietnamese law, partly because after setting up operations they contract foreign nationals who are not familiar with the laws they are supposed to abide by.

As the most frequent criticisms have been leveled at South Korean firms, Seoul's representatives in Vietnam have taken steps to improve the situation. Total committed South Korean investment in Vietnam reached 2.4 billion dollars in 1996.

The consulate in Ho Chi Minh city, where most South Korean firms operate, has had the Vietnamese labor code translated into Korean and is encouraging firms to introduce Korean language classes for employees.

A labor attache has been appointed. Attache Park Deuk Whan says progress has been made but much remains to be done.

"Labor relations have to be improved very much," said Park. Consul Lee Nam Soo puts some of the problems down to the language barrier, as many South Korean managers have to speak to their Vietnamese staff through interpreters.

Incidents involving South Koreans have included one in which a woman manager lined up and hit a number of her employees. The company was prosecuted and the woman forced home after receiving a three-month suspended jail sentence. But the $200 fine imposed on the firm would not be considered a major deterrent by many overseas concerns.

Vietnamese officials insist that such problems do not occur at every firm and in particular that larger companies doing business in Vietnam normally abide by the rules. And they insist Vietnam is keen for contact with foreign firms and the chance to learn from its more developed neighbors.

But Le adds a word of warning. "Those management skills that insult the employee we cannot use," he says.

Good Rains Again May Help India Meet Food Targets

NEW DELHI — Good rains against this year could boost India's food production, a newspaper reported Monday.

Food production may touch 195 million tons this year, about five million tons more than last year, according to preliminary estimates by the Agriculture Ministry, the Economic Times newspaper reported.

Calculations by the weather office have indicated that rains will be good again, for the 10th successive year, it said. The weather office uses a mathematical model of 16 parameters to determine the nature of the monsoon. A formal announcement is expected to be made at the end of this month.

The rains are expected to begin next month in the southern state of Kerala and move across the country by July.

The official food grain target has been set at 193 million tons, the paper said. (AP)

Turkey to Host Summit of D-8 in June

ANKARA - Turkey will host leaders from seven Muslim countries in June for a summit on economic cooperation championed by Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, a state minister said on Friday.

The grouping, known as the Developing-Eight (D-8), met in Istanbul at the start of the year to consider the potential for joint projects in industry, finance and trade.

Alongside Turkey, the grouping brings together Iran, Egypt Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Malaysia.

"The heads of state of the eight countries will meet in Istanbul in June to begin this cooperation officially," State Minister Abdullah Gul told journalists at the start of a two-day technical committee meeting preparing the way for the summit.

Erbakan has given priority to strengthening ties with the Islamic world since coming to power last June. Soon after the formation of his coalition he visited all D-8 countries except Bangladesh.

However, secularist Turkey's Islamist-led government has come close to collapse in recent weeks in a row with the secularist military. Any replacement government might not look so warmly on such close cooperation with Muslim nations.

Gul, a close aide of Erbakan, said the committee would produce concrete plans for projects in helicopter and car production, textiles and agriculture.

"The cooperation between the eight countries has started to yield fruit," Gul said. "It has the aim of activating the market and buying power among these countries and cooperating in production under better conditions."

An adviser to the Prime Minister told Reuters that Turkey was putting forward 30 projects ranging from the manufacture of planes to light transport systems, trucks and textile machines.

Gul said the gathering did not have political aims and reflected a move towards greater global integration.

"This is not the creation of a separate political block as in the age of the cold war. Rather than being a separate grouping, this work is a movement towards greater integration in the world," he said.

Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore Ease Visa Requirements

HANOI — The governments of Vietnam, Singapore and Thailand have agreed to streamline and in some cases waive visa requirements for short-term visitors between their countries, reports here said Monday.

Vietnam agreed to allow Singaporean passport holders to stay in the country for a maximum of 90 days without having to apply for a visa, the official Vietnam news agency (VNA) reported.

In turn, Singapore will exempt Vietnamese officials and diplomats of visa procedures depending on their objective and the nature of their trip, VNA said.

Meanwhile, Thailand and Vietnam have agreed to a reciprocal agreement whereby diplomatic and official passport holders will no longer need to apply for visas in advance.

Holders of ordinary passports from all three countries will only have to wait two days for travel documents, VNA said.

The new visa agreement is expected to give a boost to business and tourist travel to the three countries, which existing onerous visa procedures had hampered, observers said. (AFP)

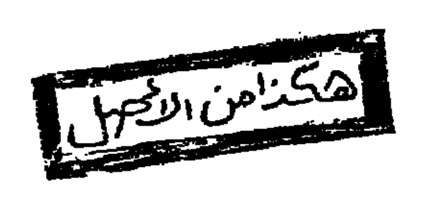
Computers an Integral Part of Young Americans' Lives

WASHINGTON — Eighty-nine percent of young americans use a computer at least several times a week, and consider it an integral part of their lives, according to a poll in the latest edition of Newsweek.

Ninety-two percent of the youths said that computers helped them learn, 61 percent had been on the Internet and half said they had used it like a library to retrieve information, the news weekly reported.

Asked about technology in general, 98 percent said it improved their lives, according to the poll of 508 Americans aged 12 to 17 done by Princeton Survey Research Associates. (AFP)




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